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Soul Winning

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

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Soul Winning

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By GEORGE B. THOMPSON

Author of
"Ministry of the Spirit"

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"He that winneth souls is wise."—*Solomon.*
"I seek not yours, but you."—*Paul.*

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Seed Sowing

Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broadcast it o'er the land.

Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, and moist and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky.

—*Montgomery.*

Foreword

In the Northwestern University, situated at Evanston, Ill., twelve miles north of Chicago, there was organized some years ago, among the students, a volunteer life-saving crew, which soon became famous for very efficient service.

One morning, word came that a steamer was in distress on the lake. The students hurried down to the shore. There they saw the "Lady Elgin," not only in distress, but going to pieces under the power of the storm. Men and women were in imminent danger of being lost.

Among the life-saving crew were two brothers from Iowa. One of these brothers stripped off all surplus clothing and swam out and brought one passenger to the shore. He went again and brought another, and then another, and another, and another, and another, until there were eight or nine on the shore of Lake Michigan whom he had rescued. He was chilled with the cold.

As he stood there trembling before the fire of logs which had been kindled, he looked out over the lake, and saw another man in peril. He said, "I must go again." They gathered around him, saying, "It does not mean rescue for him for you to go; it means death to you." But he broke from the crowd and plunged

once more into the icy waters and brought a tenth, an eleventh, and a twelfth to the shore.

Again he stood by the fire, his strength apparently all gone. As they looked at him there, so blue and chilled with cold, it seemed as if death had put its icy hand upon him. But he looked again toward the wreck, and saw others in peril. Once more he struck out through the storm, and brought the thirteenth, and fourteenth, and fifteenth to the shore.

Cold and exhausted, he stood once more by the fire. But he could not rest. The victims of the storm lay upon his heart.

Once more he looked out, and saw a beam drifting toward the shore. Clinging to that beam was a man. On closer observation he saw the man's wife also clinging to the timber, and the man was making almost superhuman efforts to save her. As the rescuer stood looking, he saw that the beam was drifting around a point of land that meant death to those in peril. Weak and exhausted as he was, he broke from the crowd again, and plunging into the water, grasped the beam. Exerting all his remaining strength, he swung it around the perilous point, and brought the man and his wife safely to land.

That afternoon, as this young student stood in his room with his roommate, pale and exhausted, he said, "Did I do my best? Did I

do my very best? Oh, I am afraid I did not do my very best!" And as he tossed in delirium that night, through all its long hours they tried to calm him; his brother sat beside his bed endeavoring to soothe and comfort him. But he could think only of those who were lost. His brother said, "Why, you saved seventeen!" "Oh," he said, "if only I could have saved one more!"

This thrilling incident expresses the object of this book. There is nothing especially new in these pages. A number of illustrations have been gathered from various sources, hoping that they may kindle in the heart a new and stronger desire to save those being drawn down by the undertow of sin.

It is said that John Eliot's work among the Indians in Massachusetts kindled the missionary flame in the heart of David Brainerd; that Brainerd's flame touched Jonathan Edwards; and that Edwards's pamphlet on "Extraordinary Prayer for a Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom" kindled a flame in Carey's bosom.

If the hearts of those who read these pages are inspired with a stronger passion for souls, if they are led to go out after those who are ready to perish and save them from the fires of perdition, the purpose of the author will have been met.

G. B. T.

Stir Me

"STIR me, O stir me, Lord! I care not how,
But stir my heart in passion for the world;
Stir me to give, to go, but most to pray;
Stir, till the blood-red banner be unfurled
O'er lands that still in heathen darkness lie,
O'er desert where no cross is lifted high.

"Stir me, O stir me, Lord! till all my heart
Is filled with strong compassion for these souls;
Till thy compelling 'must' drive me to prayer;
Till thy constraining love reach to the poles,
Far north and south, in burning, deep desire;
Till east and west are caught in love's great fire.

"Stir me, O stir me, Lord! Thy heart was stirred
By love's intensest fire, till thou didst give
Thine only Son, thy best-beloved One,
E'en to the dreadful cross, that I might live;
Stir me to give myself so back to thee
That thou canst give thyself again through me.

"Stir me, O stir me, Lord! for I can see
Thy glorious triumph-day begin to break;
The dawn already gilds the eastern sky!
O church of Christ, awake! awake!
O stir us, Lord, as heralds of that day!
The night is past, our King is on his way."

I

The Value of a Soul

Some years ago a vessel crossing the Pacific Ocean struck a reef jutting out from one of the numerous islands. The force of the sea was fast breaking the ship in pieces. Confusion was everywhere, and men and women were anxiously seeking some means of escape.

Among the passengers was a miner, returning from seeking his fortune in the rich gold fields of Australia. It was not a great distance to shore. He measured his strength, and concluded that he was able to swim to land with his gold, which represented his life work, buckled around him.

Just as he was ready to plunge into the foam-capped billows, a sweet-faced little girl came to him, and looking up in her helplessness, said beseechingly, "Won't you please save me? I have no papa here to help me. Won't you, please?"

What should he do? To save this beautiful child he must abandon the gold for which he had toiled long and hard. He could not save both. Something must be done quickly, for the fury of the storm was tearing the vessel to pieces. He glanced at his gold, but the

soft pressure of the child's hand and her pleading voice touched his heart. His decision was made. Unbuckling his gold, he threw it on the deck, and fastening the child to him as best he could, he plunged into the angry sea, finally reaching the land, where he fell exhausted and unconscious.

As consciousness returned, he beheld the child he had saved standing by his side, with tears of joy and love flooding her eyes. The ship had disappeared, and with it the gold for which he had toiled; but he had saved a human life.

Did not this old miner make a wise and noble choice? We all say he did. But the lesson should go home to our hearts and influence our lives. A world is doomed, sinking beneath the curse of sin. On every hand may be found those who are lost, and who turn to us with a cry for salvation. These should be to us more precious than the gold of Ophir.

A young man distinguished for his attainments in mathematics, was fond of challenging his fellow students to a trial of skill in solving problems. One day a classmate came into his study, and handing him a folded paper, said, "Here is a problem I wish you would solve for me," and at once left the room. The paper was quickly unfolded, and the following words were read: "What shall it profit a man, if he

gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" This solemn question led to the young man's conversion. Truly, this is the most important subject to which the human mind ever gave study.

The value of a soul, who can estimate? It can be estimated only in the light of its cost. "Would you know its worth, go to Gethsemane, and there watch with Christ through those hours of anguish, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood. Look upon the Saviour uplifted on the cross. Hear that despairing cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Look upon the wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet. Remember that Christ risked all. For our redemption, heaven itself was imperiled. At the foot of the cross, remembering that for one sinner Christ would have laid down his life, you may estimate the value of a soul."—"*Christ's Object Lessons*," *p. 196.*

About us on every hand men are playing with their souls as with a toy. They need a vision that they may be able to see what it will be worth to them to be saved, to dwell amid the supernal glories of the earth made new, to range through the eternal domain of the Creator. But blinded by sin, they are selling their souls for the perishing things of earth.

It is said that visitors to the Falls of Niagara are directed to a spot on the margin of a precipice where a thoughtless and gay young lady some years ago lost her life. Enraptured with the wonders of the unrivaled scene about her, and ambitious to pluck a flower from a cliff where no human hand had ever before ventured, leaning far over the verge she caught sight of another lovely flower. In her delirium of anticipation she leaned still farther over the brink of the yawning cataract. Her arm was outstretched for the beautiful blossom. But suddenly the earth yielded beneath her feet, and with a shriek she fell into the foaming waters and was borne away. She sacrificed her life for a fading flower.

How like the case of many about us who are sacrificing their souls for the fading things of this life! While reaching for the riches, fame, and pleasures of earth, life ends, and all is lost.

It is sad to see a field of luxuriant grain swept and blasted by a devastating tornado; and far sadder the ruin by flame or flood of some proud, beautiful city, its homes and inhabitants destroyed; but infinitely more sad is the ruin by sin of a soul for whom Jesus died.

Yonder is a man drowning. He is sinking for the last time. You plunge in and save him, and he lives twenty years longer, a loving husband and a happy father. You really added

twenty years to his existence. But one soul saved in the kingdom of God will live in the effulgent glory and joy of the heavenly world long enough to equal the total ages of all who have lived from creation to the end of time, and then will have only begun to live; all eternity will still stretch before him, where, with all the curse removed, he can bask in the sunshine of God's presence through countless ages.

Think of the unending ages of bliss before the redeemed! To give even temporary joy to a soul in perplexity or sorrow, is worth while; but to see a lost, despairing soul turn to God through our labors, to enjoy the unspeakable happiness of eternal ages, fills our own heart with joy beyond utterance.

Here, men long for that which they can never attain; but there, every need will be supplied, and we shall bask in the sunlight of his presence, and be satisfied.

Here, men suffer hunger and want, and know the pinch of poverty; there, we shall enjoy the abundant riches of the heavenly land.

Here, the joy and pleasures fade, and leave an aching void in the heart; there, at God's right hand will be "fulness of joy" and "pleasures forevermore."

Here, men live in hovels, and in homes that do not endure; there, a mansion is prepared by

Him who hung on the cross, and died that we might ever live.

Here, men grow old: the aged and infirm are all about us, tottering on the brink of the tomb. The hearse all too soon conveys to the city of the dead the young as well as the old. But there, the portals of the tomb will be a thing unknown, for there shall be "no more death."

Here, our souls are bowed down with bitter sorrow and affliction, and the falling tear tells that the heart is broken; there, tears will be wiped from all eyes, and peace will flow on as a river forever.

Here, disappointment and calamity do their work, and men sit in the region and shadow of death; there, light and joy will spring forth in all their fulness.

Here, men are buffeted by the enemy and tempted to the utmost; there, no deceiving foe will lead any to do wrong, and every evil passion of the soul will be subdued and brought into harmony with God. Through the limitless vistas of eternity the saved will dwell with God, and sin no more.

Here, men suffer pain; there, pain will be unknown. The lame man will leap as a hart, and the bloom of perpetual youth will be seen on every face.

All this, and infinitely more, is within the reach of every sinner. With immortal vision the saved will contemplate the wonders of creation and the glories of redemption. As the redeemed visit all the worlds which roll within the domain of the universal Architect, new beauties will be seen, and more and more will unfold the matchless love of God in the salvation of sinners.

"All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar,— worlds that were filled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe, but rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed race. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation,— suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of his power displayed.

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is pro-

gressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of his character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise."—*"The Great Controversy," pp. 677, 678.*

"Let the lower lights be burning!
Send a gleam across the wave!
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman,
You may rescue, you may save."

II

The Consuming Passion

If love of power consumed the great Cæsar, and love of pleasure, Mark Antony, and if the whole world is swayed by some mighty passion, why should not God's people be consumed by a love for souls? Indifference to the peril of lost souls is, I fear, sapping the foundation of all evangelistic effort. It is destroying religion and withering up whole churches.

Because of their love for fame and country, thousands are willing to risk their lives on the field of battle. Consumed by an ambition for temporal power, no sacrifice is thought to be too great. For love of money some will cast honor and character into the pawn. The consuming fire of worldly honor burns so fiercely in the bosom of countless numbers that they will gladly make any sacrifice to attain the goal of their ambition. Unnumbered thousands, possessed of splendid powers of mind and body, and with rare opportunities to make their lives noble and useful, are seized by the lust of pleasure, and led to lay all on the altar of vanity and emptiness, only to find in the

end, when the remorseless tyrant Death lays his icy finger upon them, that they have lost all, including heaven and eternal life. Others are controlled by a passion to succeed in one of the thousands of noble, honorable, and worthy pursuits of life. Some are consumed with a zeal for great acquisitions in the field of knowledge, for which they barter the saving knowledge of the things of God.

While the children of men are thus consumed by worldly pursuits and prospects, giving their lives and fortunes to the transitory things of earth, should not God's people, who know the worth of eternal things, who realize that they themselves have been redeemed, and who have to some extent a vision of the value of a soul, who see the death march of myriads of human souls toward irretrievable destruction, and who expect to witness in a little while the burning glory of the Son of God when he comes to be glorified in his saints,— should not such a people be consumed with a passion for the souls of their fellow men? Can you tell why *you* are not? Does not *your* indifference in this matter terrify you? What answer will you give the great Judge of all when he makes inquisition for souls? When he asks, "Where is the flock that was given thee, the beautiful flock?" will you be free from their blood?

The world is doomed. The instability of earthly things is apparent everywhere. Saving souls is the only thing worth while. It ought to be the chief end of every man's life. Those who themselves have been rescued from the hand of the enemy, should put forth every effort in their power to save other enslaved souls.

It was this passion that consumed Christ. To fill the mansions in glory with blood-bought souls, it was necessary to leave the throne of universal sovereignty, and die on Calvary's cross. He might have gone to an unfallen world, where he would have been received with acclamations of praise and adoration; but his love for a lost race led him to this home of sin, to the manger and to Calvary. There is therefore a blood mortgage, so to speak, on all that we have, as followers of him who gave all to save the lost.

This passion for the lost burned in Jesus' bosom with such consuming power that he would have left the mansions of glory, where homage and adoration for him were poured forth from countless millions of sinless angels and unfallen beings, if he had known that only *one soul* would believe in him and be saved. He would have looked on this one soul, happy in the immortal and unending glory of Paradise, and been satisfied. "In the parable the

shepherd goes out to search for one sheep,—the very least that can be numbered. So if there had been but one lost soul, Christ would have died for that one."—"*Christ's Object Lessons*," *p. 187*.

"There is One who is our example and inspiration beyond all prophets, apostles, and martyrs. To him let us turn. When his disciples saw him in the temple, there was one passage out of the prophets which sprang to every lip, '*The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*.'

"The Master's eyes were flashing; all sense of fear and shame had melted as the mist melts in the fierce sun. The desecration and desolation of the Father's house set every nerve athrill. That was the beginning of his Messianic ministry, and he kept up that pace until his all-consuming zeal brought him to the cross. He had no heart in anything but his mission. His meat and drink were to do God's will.

"His disciples understood his power, and could never shake off the impelling force of his zeal. The last words that he spoke were hot with haste. They felt that he demanded every day of them what they had seen every day in him, and to that high devotion they yielded themselves until they overcame every opposition of the pagan world, and overthrew their temples and their gods. His life was a life of yearning,

and it could be compressed into a single sentence, 'He had a passion for saving the lost.'

"There is a depth of meaning in the words of Thomas Goodwin: 'God had only one Son, and he made him a minister.' How gloriously did he fulfil that ministry until he had watered every ledge by sea and mountain with his tears, moistened the olive leaves of Gethsemane with the sweat of his soul, and stained his own brow with the blood of his passion, and broke his heart upon a cross of shame. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life. He was a man of infinite pity and of tears. If any man is ashamed to weep over the people, he is not like his Master. He bore the marks of his anxieties.

"Once the Jews made a guess at his age. They put him near fifty. As a matter of fact, he was near thirty. What he announced at the beginning of his life as his program, he kept up to the end. He went about his Father's business, and he was sore straitened until his baptism of service should be accomplished." —"*Pastoral and Personal Evangelism*," *pp. 54-56.*

Unconcern in this matter is cruel and perilous. No half-heartedness can be pleasing to God. An evangelist puts it in this form:—

"I said one day to a great business man, 'How long would you keep a man in your employ if you knew he was half for you and half

for your competitor?' He said, 'I should keep him until I found it out.' Stepping over to his private desk, he took out a piece of paper and handed it to me, and I read an ironclad agreement, which stated that whenever a man became part of this great business concern, he practically said to the representative of the company, 'All my influence is yours, all my strength is yours, all the power I have is yours.' And the merchant said to me, 'When a man signs that contract, we give him the right to use our name. We could not give him this privilege if we could not control him.'"—"*Power*," *pp. 17, 18.*

The passion for the lost is the most godlike among men. It is the only passion that should rule in a Christian heart. Not until this passion of love burns in the heart with a yearning and irresistible power can one be used much in the saving of the lost.

It was this consuming love that caused Moses to forsake the pleasures of the court, and lead a rebellious people from Egypt to Canaan. Hear him plead with God to spare stubborn, sinful Israel in the wilderness: —

"Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written."

The Israelites have committed a great sin, and Moses is telling God that if he cannot forgive their sin, he may blot his name out also, from the book of life, and he will perish with them in the wilderness. A great passion this!

Witness the burden of Jeremiah for his people: "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Some one has said we have only one weeping Jeremiah, as if that were enough. But the situation about us is such that there should be many who weep for the lost. The ministers of God are exhorted to "weep between the porch and the altar," and say, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach."

We weep over sinners too little. The solemn responsibility laid upon us we regard altogether too lightly; we have too little travail of soul for those who are without hope.

> "Did Christ o'er sinners weep,
> And shall our cheeks be dry?"

It is those who go forth weeping that gather gospel sheaves. It is those who sow in tears that reap in joy. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubt-

less come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

"Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,
Though the loss sustained our spirit often grieves;
When our weeping's over, he will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves."

It was this divine passion that burned in the heart of the apostle Paul. He felt the woe of God upon him. He said, "I seek not yours, but *you*." This consuming love sustained him when in stripes, in prison, in tumults, when being stoned, when shipwrecked, when in perils among robbers, among his own countrymen, and among the heathen. It sustained him in weariness and pain, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness. His burden for his people was so great that in his agony he was willing to be cast away himself if that would insure the salvation of the people who persecuted him. Marvelous passion this!

It was this same passion that led Livingstone into the jungles, swamps, and malaria of Africa in search of lost, benighted souls. He died on his knees, praying for those for whom he gave his life. His body lies entombed in Westminster Abbey, as one of England's uncrowned kings, but his heart is buried in Africa. What could be more appropriate?

Baxter wrote at the close of his life, "I remember no one sin that my conscience doth so much accuse and judge me for as for doing so little for the saving of men's souls, and for dealing no more fervently and earnestly with them for their conversion."

Dr. Lyman Beecher, when asked what he considered the greatest of all things, said: "It is not theology; it is not controversy; it is to save souls."

Brainerd, the consecrated missionary among the Indians, said, "I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls for Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things; when I waked my first thought was of this great work."

It is said that Whitefield scarcely ever preached without weeping, so heavily did souls press upon his heart. This consuming zeal burned also in the bosom of John Knox.

"Late on a certain night, John Knox was seen to leave his study, and to pass from the house down into an inclosure to the rear of it. He was followed by a friend; when, after a few moments of silence, his voice was heard as if in prayer. In another moment, the accents deepened into intelligible words; and the earnest petition went up from his struggling soul to

heaven, 'O Lord, give me Scotland, or I die.' Then a pause of hushed stillness; when again the petition broke forth, 'O Lord, give me Scotland, or I die.' Once more all was voiceless, noiseless; when, with a yet intenser pathos, the thrice-repeated intercession struggled forth, 'O Lord, give me Scotland, or I die.'"

John Vassar was consumed with a love for the lost. To win souls was his greatest joy. He was continually looking for opportunities to point sinners to Christ. Being in a hotel one day, he saw in the parlor a finely dressed butterfly of fashion. Approaching her, he said, "Excuse me, madam, but I feel that I must ask if you are trusting in Jesus Christ." Then he talked to her about her soul. When her husband returned, she told him of the personal address of the stranger. He replied, "Why did you not tell him to attend to his own business?" "O husband," she exclaimed, "if you had seen the expression on his face, and how earnest he was, you would have thought he was attending to his business." As a Christian, his business was to win souls, and he labored untiringly to this end.

Rev. A. Mahan, in his work entitled, "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost," tells of a layman named Carpenter, who by careful esti-

mate had brought ten thousand souls to Christ. This man had a consuming passion for lost souls.

The truly converted soul cannot refrain from the work of soul-winning.

"Tell the birds amidst the burst of spring not to sing; tell the waters welling from the depths not to flow; tell the happy child not to laugh and jump; tell sun and stars not to shine; and when these have obeyed you, then tell the soul which has been baptized with the love of God, that it must not speak of him, and it will laugh you to scorn. It cannot but speak what it has seen and heard."

The Aching Heart

"The world's great heart is aching, aching fiercely in the night,
And God alone can heal it, and God alone give light;
And the men to bear the message, and to preach the living Word,
Are you and I, my brothers, and all others that have heard.

"Can we close our eyes in slumber, can we fold our hands at ease,
While the gates of night stand open to the pathway of the seas?
Can we shut up our compassion, can we leave one prayer unsaid,
Ere the souls that sin has ruined have been wakened from the dead?

"We grovel among trifles, and our spirits fret and toss,
While above us burns the vision of the Christ upon the cross,
And the blood of God ~~is dropping~~ was shed from his wounded hands and side,
And the voice of God is crying, 'Tell poor sinners I have died!'

"O Voice of God, we hear thee, above the wrecks of time,
Thine echoes roll around us, and the message is sublime;
No power of men shall thwart us, no stronghold us dismay,
For God commands obedience, and love has led the way!"

III

The Joy of Soul Winning

THERE is no joy equal to that of seeing lost souls turn from sin to righteousness. Earthly joys fade. The mirth and laughter of today may give place to the deepest sorrow ere another sun. But the joy of rescuing the lost endures. Every worldly joy may die; this lives. The joy of the world is "like lightning,— short, hurried, transient, scorching; the other is like light,—lasting, healthful, beautiful, and healing."

It was for "the joy that was set before him" in seeing redeemed souls saved eternally in his kingdom, that Jesus "endured the cross, despising the shame." "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."

Why this humiliation all the way from the throne to Calvary? — It was to save from eternal ruin a sinful, rebellious race. Because of his love for man, Jesus could not have been happy to remain in glory and allow this lost world to perish. Could you be happy in your

beautiful home, in the midst of comforts and ease, if you knew that one of your children was lost somewhere in the mountains, freezing and dying, yet within your reach? Home would be a place of torture to you under such conditions. Your only joy would be in leaving its comforts and seeking for the one who was perishing. No more could Jesus enjoy the riches of glory while you and I were perishing. His joy was to save the entranced, deluded slaves of sin. And when he looks upon that innumerable company of blood-washed souls in his kingdom, he will "see of the travail of his soul, and . . . be satisfied."

"Over in London, some time ago, a noble woman died. God touched her eyes, and they were closed; her heart, and it ceased its beating. They carried her into one of the greatest auditoriums, that the city and the world might pay her honor. A representative of the Queen honored herself by being present. Lords and ladies were there; the rich people of England came to look and weep. At last the poor people came pressing their way into the great building. The weeping thousands passed beside the sleeping woman.

"At last a very poor woman made her way down the aisle. She had every mark of poverty; she carried a child on one arm, and led another by the hand. When she reached the coffin, she

put the baby on the floor, loosed the clasp of the other child's hand, and then stooped to kiss the glass which covered the face. She thereby stopped the passing of the throng. The guard, stepping forward, took her by the shoulder, saying as he did so: 'Woman, you will have to move on; you are stopping the people.' She lifted her face to his for a moment, and then, turning to the surging mass of people in the building, she cried out: 'My friends, I will not move on! I have walked sixty miles, and carried my baby, that I might look upon this woman's face. She saved my boys from hell, and I have a right to look and to weep.' Then bending down she kissed again and again the glass covering the face, while the multitude sobbed in sympathy with her.

"Who was she, sleeping in the coffin yonder? Why, that was Mrs. Booth, the mother of the Salvation Army, one of the grandest women God has ever called into his service, and I am sure you know why; not because her social position was better than yours, for that might not be true; not because her intellectual qualifications were superior to yours, for that might be untrue; but because she was filled with the Holy Ghost."

If this great soul, weary, and resting in the embrace of death, could have awakened and heard that forlorn mother say, "She saved my

boys from hell," she would have felt well repaid for all the toil and sacrifice she had experienced.

The souls we have brought to Jesus will be our "crown of rejoicing" through the eternal ages. One writer puts the matter this way:—

"Suppose that 'when the roll is called up yonder,' I am there myself, but that all through the eternal ages I am unable to find a single person who is there because of my having led him to Christ; how much will heaven mean to me?"

Suppose you are saved; and as you walk amid the beauties and supernal glories of the new earth, you see among the millions of the redeemed, companies of people here and there, some groups large, others small, gathered around those who have been instrumental in their salvation; would you be happy if you were unable to find among all the redeemed even one whom you had led to God?

In that throng are those whose labors have influenced many to accept Christ. Others have led perhaps only a very few souls to Jesus. I somehow feel that there will be a kindred bond of union between those who have been brought into the fold of Christ through our labors. How will you feel when, wandering amid the sun-kissed glories of the celestial mansions, where diadems of beauty adorn every brow,

you are asked, Where is your group of redeemed souls? What will you answer? What excuse can you give for your neglect?

There you will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the prophets and martyrs of Jesus, the widow who put the two mites into the treasury, the thief who turned to Jesus on the cross, and many others; but if, as you walk amid the redeemed in heaven, you fail to find a single soul whom you have been instrumental, under Christ, in saving, can you enjoy the bliss of eternity, think you? You could not be happy under such circumstances. You would be out of harmony with the spirit of the place, without any real companionship throughout the endless cycles of eternity.

I read somewhere of a nominal church member, who, like many others, was sitting at ease in Zion, when one night she had a dream. She dreamed that she died and at the gates of the celestial city knocked for admission. The gate was opened and the question asked, "Who is it?" She gave her name, and then was asked, "Who is with you?" "No one," she replied, "I am alone." With a sigh the attendant at the gate said, "No one can enter here alone; you must bring some one with you." And the gate was shut. This dream made so strong an impression on her that from that time she became an earnest worker for lost souls.

We too should awake from sleep, for true joy, not only in this life, but in the life to come as well, is in gathering sheaves for the heavenly garner. The great apostle and soul-winner, writing to the Thessalonian church, said, "Ye are our glory and joy." And think of the unspeakable joy of the one who is saved!

The final triumph of righteousness over unrighteousness is assured, but the people of God can triumph in Christ *now*. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Thank God, we can be saved now. Today we can hear his voice, and respond. Today we can be saved from sin. God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." He "hath chosen us," he "hath made us accepted in the beloved," and "we have redemption through his blood." The transaction is done. The eternal triumph and salvation of those who believe is assured through Christ. It only remains for us to lay hold of the precious promises by faith, and rejoice daily in this blessed truth.

"Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." "Always causeth us to triumph"! causeth us to triumph now, today, all this day, and tomorrow, and through life! Blessed salvation!

Salvation brings joy to the heart. It brings joy to be saved from some impending and terrible danger, but how much greater the joy to know that one is saved from sin!

Some years ago the great liner "Atlantic" foundered off the coast of Newfoundland, and hundreds perished in the angry, frigid sea. On board was a prominent business man, who was reported as among the missing. His place of business was draped in mourning, and kind friends tried to console his sorrowing family. But the next morning a telegram came to his business partner, bearing the word, "Saved." Then there was great rejoicing in his home. The man himself, rejoining his loved ones, rejoiced at his deliverance from death, and the friends who had mourned with the family came to rejoice with them.

So an assurance of salvation from sin brings joy and gladness into the heart. It makes others glad also. And in heaven there is joy. "I say unto you, That likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

It is truly a joy to lead thirsty souls to the fountain of life, where all can drink and thirst no more.

A wonderful fountain is this,—

A fountain that pours forth blessings for all mankind.

A fountain that sends out the invigorating water of life eternal.

A fountain from which we may drink and thirst no more.

A fountain which, unlike the fountains of earthly joy and pleasure, satisfies the desires of every heart.

A fountain where the beggar from the hovel may drink as freely as the millionaire from the mansion.

A fountain where the child and the youth may partake of this life-giving stream.

A fountain where the aged and infirm, with hoary locks, tottering on the brink of the grave, may stoop and drink and live.

A fountain where the bereaved, as they stand by the open portals of the grave, may drink the water of comfort.

A fountain where those whose souls are bowed down with bitter sorrow or affliction, may drink and find peace and consolation.

A fountain where those who sit in darkness and the regions of death, without hope, may come and drink and find light and joy.

A fountain where those who are tempted and buffeted by the enemy may drink and

secure strength to resist all the adversaries of the soul.

A fountain where the most crimson sinner may freely drink and find pardon for all his sin and iniquity.

A fountain where the servants of God, worn and weary with the burdens borne in the heat of the day, may drink and be refreshed.

A fountain, boundless and exhaustless in its fulness, the waters of which sparkle in purity and pour forth in a stream of endless life and blessing to all.

Truly, those who come to this fountain and drink, may say that their cup runneth over.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

IV

The Price of Soul Winning

On the tomb of one whose life was devoted to the ministry of the word and the winning of souls, there is a seal showing a candlestick with the candle burned down to the socket, and underneath it the words, "In laboring for others I burned out."

This expresses the true idea of the Christian life — to be aflame with a passion for souls, and to burn out for God.

John the Baptist was "a burning and a shining light." To burn is to be consumed. To win men we too must burn and shine. Then we must love men. This love, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, must lead us to a full and unconditional surrender. This was the experience of George Whitefield, that mighty man of God, under whose labors so many were brought to Christ. He wrestled with God for his blessing, and gave himself unconditionally to his heavenly Father. This was the secret of his power as a winner of men. His words sent conviction to thousands of hearts, and led them to turn away from a sinful life. It was not in oratory or eloquence, it was in his un-

conditional surrender, his throwing himself unreservedly upon the mercy of God, that his strength lay.

Before Pentecost there was much earnest prayer and deep consecration among the believers. Sins were confessed and put away. They all came into the unity of the faith. Then the Spirit of God was manifested in power, and multitudes were added to the church.

Before we can lead others to Christ, we must be *converted*. We can give to others only that which we have. The Lord said to Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." This is well illustrated in the life and experience of John Wesley. The following account of his experience shows the power which comes to the truly converted to reach hearts: —

"Certainly another reformation was needed, and it was inaugurated under the leadership of John Wesley, who was born in Epworth, June 17, 1703. Educated at Oxford, ordained a priest in the Church of England, he came to America to convert the Indians. Failing in his mission, he returned to England exclaiming, 'I went to America to convert the Indians, but alas! who shall convert me?'

"He now began to associate intimately with the Moravians, and finally, under the influence of Peter Böhler, he was led into the

full assurance of faith. This occurred May 24, 1738, in Aldersgate Street, London, in a Moravian chapel, at a quarter before nine in the evening, while some one was reading Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans. It was here that he testified for the first time: 'I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt that I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.' Here the waters broke out. . . .

"The conversion of Mr. Wesley was the opening anew of the fountain of the water of life, which has become 'waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over.' These waters have flowed not only in Wesleyan Methodist channels, but into all Protestant denominations, everywhere enriching their spiritual life." —"*The Way of the Lord Prepared*," *pp. 51, 52.*

We must love those who are perishing, and be willing to make any sacrifice, even of life itself, to save those appointed unto death. Joseph had to go down into Egypt to be the savior of the country in time of famine. We must plunge into the swift, turbulent waters if we are to save the drowning. One cannot ascend a fire escape and rescue persons from a burning building, without feeling the breath of the flames.

"It is enough that his disciple be as his Lord. I know of no man who has been anointed to preach for God who has not walked a path of toil and self-denial hot enough to blister his feet. The price of great victories is great surrender,— surrender of ease, of natural inclination, of everything that interferes with the one great thing we do. Men do not become saints in their sleep. Pastors do not witness great revivals by simply wishing for them. The only royal road is the one which bears the mark of a pierced foot. The light which lights the world is a burning as well as a shining one. As the oil wastes, the flame aspires. It is worth while to be consumed with the ardor of our devotion, if only we may light the world."—"*Pastoral and Personal Evangelism*," *p. 29.*

The joy of a life lost in the service of others is so beautifully set forth by the late J. R. Miller, that I copy a few paragraphs from his book, "Quiet Talks with World Winners:"—

"We are glad that while to be a soul-winner means sacrifice,— the surrender of self, the giving up of all, the forsaking of every known sin,— soul-winning brings to us the choicest blessing of Heaven. We cannot save ourselves, yet it is through saving others we ofttimes are ourselves saved.

"Two men were overtaken in a terrible blizzard one cold, wintry day on a western

plain. Ere long the awful truth dawned upon them that they were lost and freezing to death. One of the men finally said to the other, 'I can go no farther. I will sit down here. You go on, and inform my wife and family concerning my fate.' His companion became aroused, and refused to leave him. He pushed him, and urged him to still struggle on hopefully. When he could go no farther, he lifted him on his shoulders and carried him, making desperate endeavors to find a shelter. He finally succeeded in reaching a cabin on the prairie, where protection and the comforts of a warm home greeted them. It then dawned upon the man that the efforts he had made to save his companion had been the means of saving himself from the chill of death.

"During some recent researches among the ruins of Pompeii, the explorers turned up a find that told its own story. It was the body of a crippled boy. He was lame in his foot. And around the body there was a woman's arm, a finely shaped, beautiful, bejeweled arm. The mute find told its simple story. The great stream of fire suddenly coming from the volcano, the crowd fleeing for life, the little cripple unable to get along fast enough, the woman's heart touched, her arm thrown about the boy to aid his escape; then the overtaking fire-flood, and both lost. The arm that was stretched out

to save another was preserved, and only that. All the rest of the brave rescuer's body had gone. The saving part was saved. Only that mercifully outstretched to save another was itself saved."— *Pages 117, 118.*

It is equally true that those who lose their life for Christ's sake will find it. Those who, in their eagerness to save others, give themselves up unselfishly to this work, will find that they have saved their own souls from becoming cold and barren, and have received instead a life filled with the richness and joy of heaven.

"People said that Harriet Newell's beautiful life was wasted when she gave it to missions, and then died and was buried far from home, — bride, missionary, mother, saint, all in one short year,— without even telling to one heathen woman or child the story of the Saviour. But was that lovely young life indeed wasted?—No; all this century her name has been one of the strongest inspirations to missionary work, and her influence has brooded everywhere, touching thousands of hearts of gentle women and strong men, as the story of her consecration has been told. Had Harriet Newell lived a thousand years of quiet, sweet life at home, she could not have done the work that she did in one short year by giving her life, as it seemed, an unavailing sacrifice. She lost her life that she might save it. She died that she might

live. She offered herself a living sacrifice that she might become useful.

"In heart and spirit we must all do the same if we would ever be a real blessing in the world. We must be willing to lose our life,—to sacrifice ourself, to give up our own way, our own ease, our own comfort, possibly even our own life; for there come times when one's life must literally be lost in order to be saved.

"It was in a mine in England. There had been a fearful explosion, and the men came rushing up from the lower level, right into the danger of the deadly afterblast, when the only chance of safety was in another shaft. And one man knew this and stood there in the dangerous passage, warning the men. When urged to go himself the safe way, he said, 'No; some one must stay here to guide the others.' Is there any heroism of this world's life finer than that?

"It was at Fredericksburg, after a bloody battle. Hundreds of Union soldiers lay wounded on the field. All night and all next day the space was swept by artillery from both armies, and no one could venture to the sufferers' relief. All that time, too, there went up from the field agonizing cries for water, but there was no response save the roar of the guns. At length, however, one brave fellow behind the ramparts, a Southern soldier, felt that he could

endure these piteous cries no longer. His compassion rose superior to his love of life.

"'General,' said Richard Kirkland to his commander, 'I can't stand this. Those poor souls out there have been praying for water all night and all day, and it is more than I can bear. I ask permission to carry them water.'

"The general assured him that it would be instant death for him to appear upon the field, but he begged so earnestly that the officer, admiring his noble devotion to humanity, could not refuse his request. Provided with a supply of water, the brave soldier stepped over the wall and went on his Christlike errand. From both sides wondering eyes looked on as he knelt by the nearest sufferer, and gently raising his head, held the cooling cup to his parched lips. At once the Union soldiers understood what the soldier in gray was doing for their wounded comrades, and not a shot was fired. For an hour and a half he continued his work, giving drink to the thirsty, straightening cramped and mangled limbs, pillowing men's heads on their knapsacks, and spreading blankets and army coats over them, tenderly as a mother would cover her child; and all the while, until this angel-ministry was finished, the fusillade of death was hushed.

"Again we must admire the heroism that led this brave soldier in gray so utterly to

forget himself for the sake of doing a deed of mercy to his enemies. There is more grandeur in five minutes of such self-renunciation than in a whole lifetime of self-interest and self-seeking. There is something Christly in it. How poor, paltry, and mean, alongside the records of such deeds, appear men's selfish strivings, self-interests' boldest venturings!

"We must get the same spirit in us if we would become in any large and true sense a blessing to the world. We must die to live. We must lose our life to save it. We must lay self on the altar to be consumed in the fire of love, in order to glorify God and do good to men. Our work may be fair, even though mingled with self; but it is only when self is sacrificed, burned on the altar of consecration, consumed in the hot flames of love, that our work becomes really our best, a fit offering to be made to our King.

"We must not fear that in such sacrifice, such renunciation and annihilation of self, we shall lose ourselves. God will remember every deed of love, every forgetting of self, every emptying out of life. Though we work in obscurest places, where no human tongue shall ever voice our praise, still there is a record kept, and some day rich and glorious reward will be given. Is not God's praise better than man's? . . .

"Mary's ointment was wasted when she broke the vase and poured it upon her Lord. Yes; but suppose she had left the ointment in the unbroken vase? What remembrance would it then have had? Would there have been any mention of it on the Gospel pages? Would her deed of careful keeping have been told over all the world? She broke the vase and poured it out, lost it, sacrificed it, and now the perfume fills all the earth. We may keep our life if we will, carefully preserving it from waste; but we shall have no reward, no honor from it, at the last. But if we empty it out in loving service, we shall make it a lasting blessing to the world, and we shall be remembered forever."—"*Making the Most of Life*," *pp. 5-11.*

V

The Curse of Unconcern

THE woe of God is pronounced upon those who are at ease in Zion. It was when Zion travailed that she brought forth her children. This tells why there is so little numerical gain in churches, why so little burden for souls, so few tears shed, so little effort put forth for the conversion of sinners. To withhold from parched lips a cup of cold water is indeed heartless; but what shall we say of withholding the water of life from souls ready to perish?

D. L. Moody was asked by a company of Christian workers how to become a soul-winner, and he replied, "Go at it." That is the only way to win men — give yourselves to days of toil and nights of prayer. It is most startling that Christians, those who believe that Jesus is coming soon, that the judgments of God are about to fall upon a lost world, should be so indifferent concerning the eternal future of their neighbors, friends, and relatives. In secular matters we manifest great concern. Let a bank fail where some of the savings of the people are deposited, and what a stir is made! If we

see a friend in danger, we put forth almost superhuman efforts to save his life. But for those in danger of eternal damnation we often manifest little or no concern.

Rowland Hill, in whose heart the passion for souls burned, and whom the people sometimes called a madman, said: "While I passed along yonder road, I saw a gravel pit cave in and bury three men alive. I hastened to the rescue, and shouted for help until they heard me in the town almost a mile away. Nobody called me a madman then. But when I see destruction about to fall on sinners and entomb them in an eternal mass of woe, and cry aloud, if perchance they may behold their danger and escape, they say I am beside myself. Perhaps I am, but O that all God's children might thus be fired with desire to save their fellows!"

Think of Meroz. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Why were these people cursed by the Lord? What had they done? — *Nothing.* That was the trouble — they were do-nothings. Their indifference and unconcern doomed them. While their brethren were on the field of conflict, they paid no heed; they were at ease under their re-

sponsibility. Because of this they were cursed by the Lord.

It is surely an awful thing to rest under the curse of God. When the wicked go into the lake of fire, this is what they will hear: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And why are those whom the Saviour represented as being on his left hand bidden to depart into everlasting fire prepared for the legions of darkness? What sin rests upon them? — It is the sin of neglect, of unconcern, of indifference. They neglected to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to visit them who are bound; and inasmuch as they did it not, they are found on the left hand, and are bidden to depart. Their unconcern for the needs of those about them has proved their undoing.

Professed Christians toil for money, yet neglect souls whose value is beyond estimate. A writer puts the question before us this way: —

"Suppose some one were to offer me a thousand dollars for every soul that I might earnestly try to lead to Christ; would I endeavor to lead any more souls to him than I am endeavoring to do now? Is it possible that I would attempt to do *for money*, even at the risk of blunders or ridicule, what I hesitate or shrink from doing now in obedience to God's

command? Is my love of money stronger than my love of God or of souls?"

What is *your* reply to this solemn, searching question? You are a Christian; you talk of heaven and your love for God. If you were offered a thousand dollars for each sinner you should bring to Christ, would your interest in the missionary meeting deepen? Would you do any more than you are now doing to win souls?

Think of Christ's being offered a monetary consideration to give his life for the salvation of a lost race. The very thought seems almost to border on the sacrilegious. But would we, his representatives, work for souls *for money* rather than because we love them? Is our unconcern due to the fact that there is no money in it? Would we for cold cash increase our efforts in searching for the lost, when a soul saved is worth more than a world? I, though I speak thus, am persuaded of better things. We should ponder well these questions.

The same writer carries this question farther: "Suppose I were to see a blind man unknowingly approaching the brink of a high precipice, and that I were to sit by without concern or any effort to warn or save him from certain death; would I not be as guilty of his death in God's sight as though I had murdered him outright? The death of a body, which might have been (but was not) prevented, is a

terrible thing; but how about the preventable death of a human soul — perchance of many souls — for which God may hold me responsible?"

What is our reply to this question? What do *you* say? About us on every side are multitudes of those who are spiritually blind. Some of them are being led by those who themselves have no spiritual eyesight. Within our reach are those who unknowingly are making their way toward the precipice of ruin; their feet even now are standing on the verge of the cliff; one step more, and they will go over, disappear into a dark cavern below, from which there is no return. Some of these are our neighbors, or friends, or perchance of our own flesh and blood. See them on their way to perdition! Look! There they go, marching on to destruction and death! We can save some of them if we will. Are we sitting in cold, silent indifference, making no effort to warn them of the danger which lies just yonder, almost in sight? Can we do this, and yet talk of our hope of heaven? Are we pitying them because they do not have the light we have? A stationary lighthouse is all right, but it cannot take the place of a life-saving crew. Life-savers are needed.

"All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God, unless

they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls."—"*Testimonies for the Church*," *Vol. V, p. 395.*

Again we read: "Christ gave his own life to save souls, and yet you who have known his love make so little effort to impart the blessings of his grace to those for whom he died. Such indifference and neglect of duty is an amazement to the angels. In the judgment you must meet the souls you have neglected. In that great day you will be self-convicted and self-condemned."—*Id., Vol. VI, p. 425.*

Meeting, in the judgment, souls unsaved because of our unconcern, will be a fearful experience. We need to go through Gethsemane, that the chill may be taken from our hearts, and that they may be warmed with zeal for service.

"Many, many are approaching the day of God doing nothing, shunning responsibilities, and as the result they are religious dwarfs. So far as work for God is concerned, the pages of their life history present a mournful blank. . . .

"Those who neglect their duty in the home and among their neighbors, are by their unfaithfulness separating themselves from God. . . . In the day of God how many will confront us and say, 'I am lost! I am lost! and you never warned me; you never entreated me

to come to Jesus. Had I believed as you did, I would have followed every judgment-bound soul with prayers and tears and warnings.'

"In that day the Master will demand of his professed people, What have you done to save the souls of your neighbors? . . .

"No one who professes to love Jesus can long retain the favor of God if he feels no interest for sinners around him. . . . In hiding their talents in the earth, they are throwing away their opportunities to obtain a star-gemmed crown." —"*Sowing Beside All Waters*," *pp. 20, 21.*

Why not decide to become an intercessory Christian for the unsaved? Why not decide to shake off the ice of frozen indifference, and become a soul-winner for life? And why not begin *now?* Where shall you begin?—Why, begin with the person next to you. Why let your apparent lack of qualification stand in the way? A poor, stammering Christian, his heart consumed with a love for souls, can do more than the pulpit orator who has no burden for the lost. We should work while it is day, for the night, in which no man can work, quickly cometh.

VI

Gone!

"As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

Gone! A prisoner put in charge of a soldier for safe keeping till the battle was over, with the charge, "Keep this man: and if by any means he be missing, then thy life shall be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver;" and now he was gone, escaped while his keeper was doing something else. One would think that with such a responsibility, attended by such serious personal consequences, he would have made sure that the man was safe; but no — "As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone"!

I greatly fear that in the day of judgment many professed Christians will be found in the position of this man. You are a Christian; your neighbor is not. In a sense God has placed him in your charge; you are in a measure responsible for his soul. If lost, when God makes inquisition for souls, he will ask if you have done your duty. Today the man may be within your reach; an opportunity to save him presents itself. Perhaps some sorrow has come into his

life, and he longs for sympathy; his heart is tender. A word may win him, may turn him from unbelief to faith in the truth of God, from sin to holiness. You feel impressed to speak to him about the salvation of his soul, but you delay; other things attract you; you are "busy here and there." Then suddenly some calamity comes, and your charge is stricken down and dies. He is gone, and gone forever. Or some change in circumstances places him where you see him no more. You were too busy; what you were doing was important, of course, but his salvation was neglected, and now he is beyond recall. Will the Master say to you in the judgment, "Well done, good and faithful servant"?

Today your bosom friend is near you. For years you have taken sweet counsel together. But the Spirit of God has entered your heart, and you have become a Christian. Now a great desire has taken possession of you to see your dearest friend enjoy the blessings of the gospel, and you determine to unburden your heart and speak to him about his soul. But you hesitate; something else seems for the time more pressing; secular business is crowding you. You resolve to see him later. But while you delay, something happens. Duty calls your friend away; or some accident cuts him down, and he lies with hands folded across a pulseless breast.

You were "busy here and there;" now he is gone.

Today your boy is with you. His heart is tender, and he yields to the impulses of the Holy Spirit. He wants to be a Christian, but does not know how to give his heart to God, does not know how to lay hold upon Jesus for the forgiveness of sin. You want him saved; you intend to talk to him; but you neglect your chance. You put off talking with him about his soul. You plan to do so tomorrow, or sometime when you have a better opportunity. You are very busy; early and late you are toiling in the performance of your daily duties. There seems to be no real hurry; you can talk with him later.

Time goes on. He grows older. His heart is not so tender now; he has found new associations, and the joys and pleasures of the world begin to grip his soul. By and by, as you see him drifting, you muster up courage to talk to him about Jesus, but you cannot quite reach his heart. While you were "busy here and there," he was drifting away from God, and now he is gone! O how sad!

Today is the day of salvation. Life is uncertain. You do not know what a day may bring forth. Speak now; do not hold your peace any longer. Point those without hope to Jesus today; tomorrow may be too late,

for then they may be gone, and gone forever.

"'As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone!'

"'Gone? Where?'

"Don't ask the awful question; it is an agony to me to think about it.

"The Spirit said, 'Speak to him. Tell him of a Saviour's love. Tell him his danger.' But I was 'busy here and there;' I neglected it; and by and by he was gone.

"I knew I ought to talk to him. I felt that I was the one God meant to put the gospel before him, and somehow I felt I ought to do it quickly — now, now!

"But I was 'busy here and there.'

"Now it is too late! He is gone!

"I shall not see him till I meet him at the judgment bar in that awful day! I know I shall see him then!

"I do not fear that day of judgment for myself, for I heard and believed God's good news that Jesus of Nazareth died for me, that he took my place on the cross, where he bore sin for the whole world. I heard that all who believed he bore their sins, and trusted him (for he rose from the dead, and is alive now), should be saved, and should not be condemned (John 5:24); for Jesus suffered in their place! I believe this, and I know I am saved. But he — he is gone!

"Maybe if I had told him, he too would have believed; and with what joy we should have met in glory!

"But he is gone! Gone without Christ, without God, without hope!

"'It has pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' Oh, if I had only told him about the good news of the gospel! If I had only said, 'Jesus Christ died for your sin. Will you trust him?'

"But I was 'busy here and there,' and I put off speaking to him; and now he is gone — gone!"

It is well to reflect on our lives as Christians. Think of our friends, neighbors, and blood kin. Have we done all we can for their salvation? Have we pleaded with them to give their hearts to God ere it is too late? In the secret places have our eyes run down with tears for the lost about us? Have any of them gone today beyond our reach, whom we might have saved?

What is your purpose for the future? Will the record be the same, or will you lay hold of God anew for strength and power to help those who are within your reach, ere they are gone forever?

Are All the Children In?

"Are all the children in? The night is falling,
And storm clouds gather in the threatening west;
The lowing cattle seek a friendly shelter;
The bird hies to her nest;
The thunder crashes; wilder grows the tempest,
And darkness settles o'er the fearful din;
Come, shut the door, and gather round the hearthstone;
Are all the children in?

"Are all the children in? The night is falling,
When gilded sin doth walk about the streets.
O, 'at the last it biteth like a serpent!'
Poisoned are stolen sweets.
O mothers, guard the feet of inexperience,
Too prone to wander in the paths of sin!
O, shut the door of love against temptation!
Are all the children in?

"Are all the children in? The night is falling,
The night of death is hastening on apace;
The Lord is calling, 'Enter thou thy chamber,
And tarry there a space.'
And when he comes, the King in all his glory,
Who died the shameful death our hearts to win,
O may the gates of heaven shut about us,
With all the children in!"

VII

Won by One

Souls are not saved in groups. Soul-winning is a personal, individual work. From the desk the minister may reach souls in the pews with the power of the message, but the greatest results, judged by the testimony of the most successful soul-winners, come from personal work with individuals. Hand-picked fruit is the best. So in laboring for sinners; the most successful work is that of personal appeal to the individual. This is well illustrated by the following incident: —

"A Sabbath school teacher, because no conversions had occurred in her class of sixteen young men, resigned, thinking herself to blame or unfitted for the great work. Seeing the unflagging interest of her pupils, neither superintendent nor pastor would consent to it. In her anxiety she prayed more earnestly for the Holy Spirit's help.

"One day while thus pleading she was so strongly moved to go and see a certain one at his home that she at once yielded, and in that home parlor she so told her anxiety that when prayer was suggested the pupil knelt with

her, and soon yielded to Christ and was most happily converted. Thus encouraged, she visited another, and another in turn, as opportunity opened, till she saw the whole sixteen won to Christ and added to the church.

"As vacancies occurred in her class, others joined, who were often converted. These pupils passing out into the business world were urged by her to write annually a letter as to their Christian life, till finally she was receiving, as years rolled on, over two hundred letters from missionaries, lawyers, mechanics, farmers, physicians, and others from various parts of the world, still busy in the pulpit, or Sabbath school, or other church work."

Life-saving crews do not save the shipwrecked in large numbers. Theirs is a personal rescue work. A man sinking beneath the waves for the last time is picked up. There is another, a boy. Hope was gone, but he is reached in time, and safely landed in the lifeboat. A sailor clings to the rigging. The vessel is fast going to pieces, but by heroic effort he too is saved. Thus the work goes on, the faithful life-savers rescuing one at a time, until all are safe.

Yonder is a building on fire. The angry flames are eating their way through the partitions into every room. In the upper story are a number of persons in great danger. The

firemen scale the ladders again and again, bringing from the doomed building, *one at a time*, those who were about to perish.

A sailing ship was driven onto the rocky coast of Scotland, by the tremendous power of a hurricane. The wind and the waves were fast beating the vessel to pieces. The life-saving crew on shore saw the vessel's plight, and went to the rescue. The storm shrieked like a band of demons bent on some errand of destruction. The danger was great, but in the face of imminent peril, and by heroic efforts, the life-savers succeeded in rescuing the crew. As they drew away from the vessel, they saw one poor fellow who had been overlooked, still clinging to the rigging. Despair was written on his face. But they said, "We cannot go back to get him. If we make the attempt, our boat will be dashed in pieces on the rocks by the relentless fury of the waves, and we shall all be lost." So they left the man still clinging to the rigging, and pulled for the shore.

When they landed, one strong young man said, "If another will go with me, I will go and get that man on the wreck." His mother, who was standing by his side, put her arms around his neck, and said, "My boy, you must not go. Remember your father was a sailor, and was lost at sea in a storm like this; and eight years ago your brother William went to sea, and we

have not heard from him since. No doubt he, too, has found a watery grave. Now if you go, and are drowned, what shall I do? I am poor and old. You are my only support. You must not go."

But gently removing her arms from around his neck, he said, "Mother, out there a man is in peril. I believe it is my duty to rescue the man clinging to yonder wreck. If I am lost in doing my duty, God will take care of you." Then kissing her sweet, though wan and wrinkled face, he with his companion stepped into the boat and rowed away through the storm.

Those on the shore waited long and anxiously, straining their eyes toward the fast-sinking ship, hoping for the boat's return. By and by they saw it in the distance striving to make its way toward the shore through the mist and the gathering darkness. Weary and worn, the two brave men struggled with all their remaining strength to reach land. When near enough to be heard, those on shore shouted, "Have you got the other man?" Lifting his hands to his mouth to trumpet the words on in advance, the unselfish young life-saver answered, "Yes; and tell mother I've got my brother William." It was only one individual he rescued; but the one lifted from the rigging ere the ship settled into the sea was his own long-lost brother.

So it is with us. About us everywhere are souls perishing, clinging to some earthly thing which soon will be swept from them by the oncoming storm. They are our lost brothers. It is our duty to rescue them, though it be at the cost of ease, or even of this earthly life itself. Thousands are adrift, ready to be drawn down by the dreadful undertow of sin. God's plan is to save men through human instrumentality. He is depending upon you and me. Saved souls are usually picked up carefully, lovingly, one at a time. We must "hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks."

It has been truly said that "it is not enough to pray for the conversion of sinners; it is not enough to look with fear upon the palaces of the rich, or with solicitude upon the hovels of the poor. Our feet must cross their threshold." As we search, we shall find one here, another there.

The aggressive principle in soul-winning is aptly and graphically illustrated by the following, told in the language of another: —

"Some time ago I came across an unusual little story. It seems that, face to face with Vicksburg, the Eleventh Indiana was badly cut up, and they sent home for reserves. They came, but they did not know anything about fighting. They had never been in a battle, and

they were to enter a hard one at the very first. Among them was a gaunt, tall Hoosier who rejoiced in the euphonious name of Peter Apples. Now, Peter had never fought. All that he knew about soldiering was that a soldier was supposed to do as he was told. So when his commander said, 'Forward march, double-quick,' why, Peter double-quicked. There was nothing else to do. He was long and lank, and away he went. The rest kept pace with him for a while, but the fire of the enemy was so hot that they began to shiver and tremble, and fell back. But Peter was going so fast, like another Peter, that he could not stop. He went on, and finally ran up the low earthworks of the enemy. A gunner was ramming home a charge, and Peter brought him a clip on the head and took him by the nape of the neck, and turned him around, and started with him toward camp. When he turned away, the enemy did not dare to shoot, for fear they would kill their own man. So Peter kept on running. When he came panting into camp, the soldiers rallied round him, and they said, 'Peter, where did you get him?' 'Get him!' said Peter; 'I got him up there! There's lots of them up there. Every man of you could have one if you had only gone after him.'

"As we look out and see the stream of humanity in our great cities and elsewhere,

men and women being swept down in the awful maelstrom, we hear that cry, 'There are lots of them there, and you can every one of you have one if you will only go after him.' And that was the Master's word —'Go ye.'"

The trouble with many of us is, we do not *go after* souls. We wait for a convenient time, for some special opportunity. But there are many all about us waiting to be gathered into the fold. The unnumbered millions around the throne will not have been rescued in groups, but one by one.

Let none become disheartened because he is not able to stir the masses with flights of oratory or with some powerful appeal to forsake their sins. Reach out for the one soul. It is an indication of true greatness to be interested in one soul; almost any one can be interested in a crowd. Begin with the one nearest to you; perhaps some one in your own home, or your unconverted neighbor. The prospect may not look encouraging, the material may seem unpromising. But take courage. Think of Jesus and Nicodemus, or of the Samaritan woman, and labor on, knowing that your work, if done faithfully, will be rewarded.

Only One Life

"'Tis not for man to trifle. Life is brief,
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours;
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

"Not *many* lives, but only *one,* have we,—
One, only one;
How sacred should that one life ever be,
That narrow span!
Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

VIII

The Personal Touch

MAN'S need of Christ furnishes the strongest possible appeal to every Christian to take to him the saving help of the gospel. It is said of the late General Booth that on one occasion he stood in that section of the world's metropolis where men and women go who are so far down in the scale of morality that they have lost all hope. As he looked upon the seething mass of humanity, living in poverty and sin, a great burden fell upon his heart. With tears of love and sympathy coursing down his cheeks, he promised God that if he would help him and give him strength, he would devote his life to the uplifting and salvation of these poor, unsaved souls.

It is the personal touch that counts. A prominent clergyman says: "Looking over many years of splendid opportunity, with the privilege of addressing thousands of people, I find that I have won more to decide for Christ in their homes and offices than at the altars of the church; and in this hand-to-hand work, there have come to my own soul the sweetest rewards of my ministry."

It is not wasting our time to work for even one soul. Three of Christ's most stirring sermons were preached to an audience of one,—to Nicodemus, to the Samaritan woman, and to the rich young ruler. The portions of these personal interviews which are preserved in the Bible for our instruction seem to be among the most precious in Holy Writ. Many other examples of personal work for souls are found in the Scriptures. To the one who said, "I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," Jesus gave some valuable lessons. To another he said, "Go thou and preach the kingdom of God." He instructs another concerning the sin of "looking back." The one man seems to have been the congregation in much of Christ's ministry. In this he has left us an example.

When Andrew had found the Messiah, he went and told "his own brother Simon," and "brought him to Jesus." Philip, being found of Christ, "findeth Nathanael." Philip the evangelist had a personal interview with the treasurer of Queen Candace, and left him a baptized believer. Paul and Silas labored personally with the jailer and his household in the midnight hour, and had the joy of witnessing their conversion and baptism before dawn. Aquila and Priscilla did personal work with Apollos, and "expounded unto him the way

of God more perfectly." These few examples, gleaned from the life of Christ and his followers as recorded in Holy Writ, should stir all Christian workers to similar endeavor.

Our efforts to help others will have an influence on those around us, leading them to do a similar work. The story is told of a little newsboy who, weary and sleepy, boarded a street car and was soon sound asleep. His feet were bare, his clothes were ragged, and he bore evidence of want and hunger. Finally two ladies across the aisle observed that his face was resting against the hard iron window sill. One of them arose, and tenderly slipped her muff under his head for a pillow. Her kindly act was observed by a gentleman in the next seat, who held out a quarter to her, and nodded toward the boy. As she took it, another man passed over a dime, and a woman emptied some pennies from her purse. Soon quite a collection was made up for the poor boy,—all the result of one personal act of a kind-hearted woman.

Some of those who have had much success in bringing sinners to Christ were themselves won by the personal effort of some one. D. L. Moody, when a young man clerking in a store, was visited by his Sunday-school teacher, who talked to him about his soul. Mr. Moody says, "I had not felt I had a soul till then." Colonel

Hadley, who is said to have knelt and prayed with more than thirty-five thousand drunkards, declares that one of the agencies which led him to Christ was a brief talk on the train with Chaplain (now Bishop) McCabe. It was the touch of his Sunday-school teacher in a revival meeting, and the question, "Do you not think you had better stand?" that started J. Wilbur Chapman for the kingdom. The late H. Clay Trumbull was won to Christ largely through a personal letter written him by a friend. He in turn became a great personal worker.

In "Individual Work for Individuals" Mr. Trumbull says: "Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time. Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching a single individual. Therefore seeking a single individual is the way of winning one person or a multitude to Christ. The world is made up of individuals. Christ longs for individuals to be in his service. Therefore he who considers Christ's love, or the world's needs, will think most of individuals, and will do most for individuals."

Again he says: "After all, it is the man-to-man work that tells. And because it is this work that is most effective, this is the work that it is best to do. Even though it is a less attractive work, as we look at it, and seems to others less important to be done, we must ad-

mit that the results are worth considering. As John B. Gough said of the one loving word of Joel Stratton that won him: 'My friend, it may be a small matter for you to speak the one word for Christ that wins a needy soul — a *small matter to you*, but it is *everything to him*.' It is forgetting this truth that causes personal work to be neglected."

A visitor at a pottery observed a workman molding a piece. The process seemed slow. The visitor asked if there was no tool that could do the work. "No," replied the potter, "we have tried several, but somehow in this work we must have the human touch." So in molding human souls into vessels for the Master's use, there must be the personal touch.

While giving attention to other things, there is danger of our losing sight, in a measure, of the real object of the church and the Sabbath school. The work of the church is to make known the gospel, and the object of the gospel is to save souls. The church has no other mission. This is the work of every redeemed soul. And it is personal work for lost souls which I am sure needs emphasis. No Christian can be a successful soul-winner without putting forth personal efforts for the lost. Most of the fruit of souls must be hand picked.

A Christian worker passing a crowd stopped. It had formed about a little child who had be-

come separated from friends and did not know his way home. The child looked up, and seeing the look of sympathy on the gentleman's face, stretched out his hands and pleadingly said, "Won't you please show me my way home?" The clergyman says, "That cry has been sounding in my ears ever since, when I find myself near a wandering soul like that boy in the city."

Within easy reach of each of us there are many lost souls who need some one to show them the way home. Their condition is a mute appeal to us for help. Some of these sit every week beside us in church and in Sabbath school. It seems unspeakably sad to think of allowing them to sit there week after week, with no personal effort made to bring them to Christ. Why is it? Can we give a satisfactory reason for our indifference when so much is at stake?

A circumstance in Elisha's experience suggests the value of the personal touch. The son of a Shunammite woman had died. In her sorrow and distress the mother laid him on the bed in Elisha's room, and hastened to the man of God for help. "When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child,

and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes."

Elisha had to deal with a child that was dead. He was not satisfied with cleansing the dead body, embalming it, or wrapping it in fine linen, and leaving it still a corpse. Neither was he satisfied when the corpse seemed to wax warm. The *dead* must *live.*

When Elisha came, he shut the door, and alone with the dead boy prayed earnestly to God. He came into close personal touch with the child, and he was rewarded by seeing the dead come to life. One becomes a winner of souls only by means of prayer, unconditional consecration, and personal labor.

If we could realize fully the value of even one soul, perhaps it would help us to become more active and earnest in the work of saving souls. Who is able to tell? How much is your child worth? What would you give to have him saved? How much would it take to reconcile you to having him eternally lost? I read of an incident recently which impressed this on my mind:—

"A farmer in North Carolina once drove with two high-mettled horses into the town. Stopping in front of one of the stores, he was about to enter when his horses took fright. He sprang in front of them, and heroically seized the reins. Maddened by strange noises, the horses dashed down the street, the man still clinging to the bridles. On they rushed, until the horses, wild with frenzy, reared on their haunches, and leaping upon the man, all came with a crash to the earth. When the people came to rescue the bleeding body of the man, and found him in death's last agony, a friend, bending tenderly over him, asked: —

"'Why did you sacrifice your life for horses and wagon?'

"He gasped with his last breath, 'Go, and look in the wagon.'

"They turned, and there asleep in the straw, lay his little boy.

"As they laid the mangled form of the hero in his grave, no one said, 'The sacrifice is too great.'"

It was his little boy sleeping in the wagon that caused this father to sacrifice his life. He was not thinking about the value of the team or the wagon, but about his boy. He was entirely oblivious to danger, and willing, if necessary, to die to save his little boy, sleeping in

the straw. Did he make too great a sacrifice? No one will say that he did.

There are other boys, worth just as much as this boy, who sit in church and Sabbath school every week. Your boy may not be among them, but they are somebody's boys. Would it be putting it too strongly to say that we should put forth as earnest efforts to save eternally in heaven the souls of those in our classes as this father put forth to save his boy from being killed? When we are willing to die that others may be saved, we shall see sinners come to Christ.

There is a great deal in being sociable and warm-hearted, and in manifesting personal interest in others. Many can be won in this way. Our teaching and admonitions should fall like drops of gentle rain, not like hard gravel. I sometimes fear that our efforts are well illustrated by this almost fatal incident: —

A man was drowning in a pond on a cold day. Some one desirous of helping him gave him the end of a plank that was covered with ice. The man tried repeatedly to get hold and thus save himself, but could not. Finally, in despair he cried: "Do give me the other end of the plank; this end is icy!" In our efforts to help others we need to be sure that we do not hold out to them the icy end of the plank.

As the overshadowing cloud of the world's doom becomes darker, greater earnestness should characterize the lives of those who realize the meaning of its portent. We should be untiring in our personal efforts to warn and save the souls of our neighbors, our friends, and our kindred. If we saw them in a burning building, in great danger of being consumed by the angry flames, we should put forth the most superhuman efforts to save them from destruction. No earthly thing would be allowed to hinder us in the work of rescue. But a fate more terrible than that awaits those in our homes and neighborhood who are unconverted. Can we sit unmoved and indifferent, and see them swept over the great Niagara of ruin? The hour has fully arrived for every one who believes that Christ is soon coming, to begin to do earnest missionary work. Our greatest need is a burden for souls. Many do but little in soul-winning. Every unsaved, unwarned soul should pain our hearts.

The writer was on a camp ground once when the word went out that a little boy, who had been left in a tent while the parents attended a morning meeting, was lost. Soon the whole camp was astir. Tears were shed, and anxiety was seen on every face. Breakfast was forgotten; nobody cared to eat. In every direction scores of people scattered and continued

their search until the lost was found. Yet in every church there are lost boys and girls, and no such stir as this is seen. Can any one give a satisfactory reason why we are so indifferent? What can we say personally?

Are you a Christian? Then ask yourself this question, Why am I a Christian? is it for my own good, or is it for the good of others? Believing that the days of human probation are almost over, we have a great responsibility resting upon us. It has been truly said, "We owe a great debt, and it is long overdue. 'I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians,' said Paul. What had he received of them? Absolutely nothing. But he had what they needed and must have, and he was their debtor until he had met that need. We have in our hand a pardon for a man condemned, and we are his debtor until we put it into his hand. It was for that purpose that we received it, and with it went the message, Go quickly everywhere."

If some one we dearly loved was under sentence of death, and we should receive from the governor a pardon for him, we would neither rest nor sleep until we had placed it in the proper hands to secure his release. No secular affairs would be allowed to hinder us.

It means hard, faithful work to rescue souls. Some are saved, "pulling them out of the fire."

However, one must bear the heat and discomfort of the fire in order to do it. To save those who are being drowned we must ourselves take the risk and plunge into the water.

But before we can prevail with men, like Jacob we must prevail with God. The gospel we preach must save ourselves; we must be able to tell of personal salvation. We ourselves must be in the ark to which we invite others. We must be men and women of prayer. We must receive from God in secret, before we can dispense in public. Mr. Whitefield's chapel was called a "soul trap." This is what every place of worship should be — a place where souls are caught for the Master.

It was the following experience that awakened Mr. Moody, and caused him to give up his business to devote his life to the saving of souls. He says: —

"I had a large Sunday school, with a thousand children. One Sunday a teacher was missing. During the week this teacher came to my place of business. I noticed that he looked very pale, and I asked what was the trouble. 'I have been bleeding at the lungs,' he said, 'and the doctor tells me I cannot live. I must give up my class, and go back to my widowed mother in New York State.' He fully believed he was going home to die. As he spoke to me, his chin quivered, and the tears began to flow.

I noticed this, and said: 'You are not afraid of death, are you?' 'Oh, no, I am not afraid to die, but I shall meet God, and not one of my Sunday school scholars is converted. What shall I say?' Ah, how different things looked when he felt he was going to render an account of his stewardship!

"I was speechless. It was something new to me to hear any one speak in that way. I said: 'Suppose we go and see the scholars and tell them about Christ.' 'I am very weak,' he said, 'too weak to walk.' I said I would take him in a carriage. We took a carriage, and went round to the residence of every scholar. He would be able to stagger across the sidewalk, sometimes leaning on my arm. Calling the young lady by name, he would pray with her and plead with her to come to Christ. It was a new experience for me. I got a new view of things. After he had used up all his strength, I would take him home. Next day he would start again and visit others in the class. Sometimes he would go alone, and sometimes I would go with him. At the end of ten days he came to my place of business, his face beaming with joy, and said: 'The last one has yielded her heart to Christ. I am going home now: I have done all I can do; my work is finished.'

"I asked when he was going, and he said: 'Tomorrow night.' I said: 'Suppose I ask

these young friends to have a little gathering, to meet you once more before you go.' He said he would be very glad. I sent out the invitations, and they all came together. I had never spent such a night up to that time. I had never met such a large number of young converts, led to Christ by his influence and mine. We prayed for each member of the class, for the superintendent, and for the teacher. Every one of them prayed. What a change had come over them in a short space of time! We tried to sing, but we did not get on very well.—

> "'Blest be the tie that binds
> Our hearts in Christian love.'"

What we as Christians need is the same loyal spirit that was manifested by a regiment in the English army. They were to assault a stronghold of the enemy. The general explained that the storming of the fortification would be attended with unusual danger, and that many would not return. Then he asked all who would volunteer for the service to step one pace to the front. Instantly every man in the regiment advanced one pace. If men fighting for an earthly kingdom and glory could do that, should not we, who are engaged in the closing struggle against the powers of darkness, stand by our colors too?

"For Others"

"Lord, help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel to pray
My prayer shall be for *others*.

"Help me in all the work I do
To ever be sincere and true,
And know that all I'd do for you
Must needs be done for *others*.

"Let Self be crucified and slain,
And buried deep; and all in vain
May efforts be to rise again
Unless to live for *others*.

"And when my work on earth is done,
And my new work in heaven's begun,
May I forget the crown I've won
While thinking still of *others*.

"Others, Lord, yes, others,
Let this my motto be;
Help me to live for others,
That I may live like thee."

IX

Too Late!

Too late! No more melancholy words than these are found in the English language. The lightning carrier conveys the news to a son that his father is in the grip of man's remorseless enemy — death. He hurries home with all speed, and arrives only to learn that his father has breathed his last, and that he is *too late.*

A skilful surgeon is summoned to the bedside of a dying man. He makes all haste. But ere he arrives the death damp has gathered, and as he looks in sadness upon his patient, in subdued tones he informs the sorrowing friends that he is *too late.*

An anxious crowd gathers around a building wrapped in flames, while the inmates are seeking escape. The fire engines hasten; everything possible is done to quench the flames. But alas! the building is consumed, and the inmates perish: help arrived *too late.*

Yonder is a vessel foundering on the rocks. The waves are fast dashing the noble ship to pieces. The terror-stricken passengers implor-

ingly plead for help. The noble life-saving crew, beholding her distress, put out to sea in the teeth of the storm, but ere they reach the doomed vessel she sinks before their eyes. They were *too late* to save the precious cargo of lives.

Heart-rending as these occurrences are, they are not so sad as the sight of a sinner gone down in sin,— gone! and all efforts to reach him forever *too late!* Today is indeed the day of salvation. The lost who can be reached today, may be beyond our reach tomorrow.

All around us are those who are making this sad and irretrievable mistake,— total indifference concerning the life to come. Sin fascinates them; friends and worldly companions urge them on in the pleasures of the world; the Spirit is grieved, and at last their sun sets in darkness. An evangelist says: —

"A few days since I passed a man in the throngs of Chicago. Twenty years ago he sat in a crowded church, on the edge of the pulpit. I appealed to him with all my heart to yield and accept Christ. My own soul felt that it was a vital hour. I left him and came back twice. Conviction was deep and commanding. His face was as white as the wall above him.

"His wife gibed him for wincing or thinking of going to the altar. His courage was not

superior to her scoffs. From that hour the hands turned backward on the dial of his life. Fortune slipped out of his hands. Integrity loosened its hold. She who stopped him in his good purpose died without His mercy. He now wanders the earth hopeless and unsaved. Lately he said to me: 'That was my fatal night.'"—"*Evangelistic Sermons*," *pp. 399, 400.*

"At a prayer meeting in a country neighborhood in western Washington, a young man appeared to be much convicted. An earnest worker in the meeting went to him, and tenderly plead with him to go forward and seek salvation. He hesitated, but finally said, 'No, I will go when I am done hauling logs; I have one month to work yet.' Four weeks from that day he and a young friend went bathing in a lake. He was using profane language while undressing. Plunging into the lake, he swam into the deep, cold water, was taken with a cramp, screamed wildly for help, then sank to the bottom. He was one month *too late*."

"One night at a revival meeting a young lady was urged to repent. She said, 'I will seek God tomorrow night.' The next evening her mother found that she intended to go to a ball, and she begged her not to go. She replied, 'I will go if I die,' and went upstairs to dress. A young man called to take her to the ballroom. She was called, but did not answer. Her mother

went to her room, and found her sitting before the glass, putting a ribbon in her hair, but she was a corpse. Seeking God tomorrow night was *too late.*"

"A young lady in New York attended a revival meeting with her parents. A pious aunt became greatly burdened and distressed for the young lady, who was unconverted. At last she went to her and earnestly plead with her to come at once and seek God; but she refused. At the close of the meeting she started home with her parents. A few rods from the church the team became frightened and overthrew the sleigh. The young lady was thrown violently against a telephone pole and instantly killed." She had put off seeking God: now it was *too late.*

I had an experience once, in traveling, which I wish never to forget. It taught me what a person may do to help those in need if he only has his eyes open; and how apt we are to miss an opportunity, and when it is *too late,* awaken to the fact that a human being in need of sympathy and help was by our side.

I was riding one day from Buffalo to Washington. Soon after leaving the station I noticed a fine-appearing gentleman, somewhat gray, sitting just across the aisle from me. He had with him, I think, four little children. The fact that he had so many small children with him attracted my attention, and mentally I con-

cluded that a man's judgment was not of the best who would start on a long journey alone with so many children.

As we rode on hour after hour, the children became restless, and two of the little girls, in moving about, came to my seat, looking as if they would like to become acquainted with me. But I had no time to spend with them; I was a preacher, and must do some reading. I did not care to be bothered. So I continued reading the books I had with me, feeling no special burden in the matter.

Finally, as we rode on and were nearing Baltimore, I grew tired of reading, and being somewhat curious to know where this man was going, concluded to speak to him; which I did. He seemed glad to have some one speak to him. In our conversation I mentioned his children, and how nice it would have been in traveling so far if their mother could have been along also. Looking up, he said, "Oh, their mother is along. She is riding in the baggage car."

I learned more in that instant than I had learned all day from my books. I can't remember now what I was reading, but I have never forgotten what he said. "Riding in the baggage car"! I knew then why he was alone with his children. Then in a few words he told me how his home had been broken up by death;

of the sorrow in his heart; and that he was taking his wife back to the place where, when a young man, he had won her for his wife, to lay her to rest in the family burying ground. Then I saw the tears steal down his cheeks, and one sweet little girl said, "Papa, what makes you cry?"

I felt like weeping too, and thought if I were only back at the beginning of the journey, I might have helped him take care of his motherless children. Soon we reached Baltimore, and he got off the train with his little ones. I got off to see where he went. I saw the pine box containing the wife and mother shoved out of the baggage car onto a track. I watched him as he, with the four little children, followed the remains around to the other side of the train.

I have never seen that man since. I lost my chance to help him. I was *too late*. But I learned a lesson I have tried ever since to profit by, and have endeavored to be more watchful for those in need of help.

Probation's hour is fast closing. Some will delay, and will exclaim at last, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Life is uncertain, and it will soon be *too late* to work for the lost. As Christians, we should be admonished to be diligent in our

efforts to bring the light of the gospel to those who are unsaved. If we delay, we may find that the opportunity is past.

"My life is not my own, but Christ's, who gave it,
And he bestows life upon all the race;
I love it for his sake, and thus I save it;
I hold it close, but only to expend it;
Accept it, Lord, for others, through thy grace."

X

The Sychar Revival

SYCHAR, at the time of Christ, was an ancient town in Samaria, near Mt. Gerizim, on which was the temple of the Samaritans. It was here, we are told, that Abram stopped on his way from Haran to Canaan, and here the Lord appeared to him, and promised the land to him and his seed.

Like most places, Sychar needed a revival. The moral tone of the place seems to have been rather low. If we had been looking for a missionary to start a great revival in that Samaritan town, we should hardly have chosen one to whom could be given such a character as the Saviour gave to the woman at the well: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that thou saidst truly."

Rather unpromising material to lead out in revival work, was it not? But this the woman did; for we read that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did." And so greatly were those wicked Samaritans stirred that they be-

sought Jesus to tarry with them. "And he abode there two days," with the result that "many more believed because of his own word."

This woman was the first to announce in Sychar that the Messiah had come, and she gave as proof the fact that he had read the secrets of her life. Her announcement aroused curiosity, and the people listened to the words of Christ as he rested at the noon hour by Jacob's well, and told them about the water of which they could drink and never thirst again.

Sometimes we find churches where but little interest is manifest. They have a round of service; but there is little sign of spiritual life. Being idle in the Lord's work, their members have time to watch one another, to discover the weaknesses and failures of their comrades in the faith and criticize them. Instead of talking about the blessing of God and what he has done for their souls, they comment on the real or supposed mistakes of their brethren, making their defects an excuse for their own slothfulness. When urged to engage in active missionary work for the Master, they excuse their spiritual slothfulness by saying, "Oh, I have no talent! I cannot do missionary work."

Poor souls, what a lame excuse! All have at least one talent for which they must render

account in the judgment. But do you not have as much talent as this Samaritan woman had? Do you think she had more influence with her neighbors than you have with your neighbors? Did she do a spiritual work that is beyond you, living as you do, in the blaze and glory of this age of light? What think you? The work of this Samaritan woman, who was instrumental in effecting a great spiritual awakening, will be a condemnation in the day of God to every spiritual sluggard and sleeping virgin. Whether you realize it or not, your excuse that you have no talent and cannot do anything for the sinners about you, is only a makeshift to cover your spiritual idleness, and will not pass muster in the judgment.

But how was this woman able to awaken Sychar, and bring so "many of the Samaritans" to Christ? We must not fail to get this point.

First: This woman had a face-to-face talk with the Saviour as he tarried that noon hour by the well. We can never talk successfully to men about their souls' salvation till we have talked with God. Her life of sin was brought up before her; all that she had ever done was pointed out, and from the water drawn from the depths of Jacob's well, she was directed to the living water of which He was the source. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give

him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Her heart longed for this "living water." She accepted Jesus as her Saviour, surrendering her heart fully to him. "Come," said she to her Samaritan neighbors, "see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Her whole life was changed. New ideals were before her. The vanity of the world failed longer to grip her soul. She turned away from sin, and the salvation of sinners about her became the consuming passion of her heart. No one can talk with Jesus face to face without being transformed in life.

Second: She had a face-to-face talk with her neighbors. It is through talking with God that we get a burden to talk to our neighbors and friends. They believed "for the saying of the woman." From talking with Jesus she went into the city and began personal work with her neighbors and friends. She told them of the words of Jesus. As she talked, they saw that her life was changed. There is nothing that will so impress sinners with their own need of Christ as the power of a repentant, transformed life. She did not sit idly by, while all about her were lost souls going down to perdition, and as an excuse for indifference claim that she did not have any talent and could not do any missionary work. The fire of righteous zeal

burned in her heart. She had real travail of soul for sinners. She went into the streets and homes of Sychar, and told them what the Messiah had done for her, and that he who was yonder by Jacob's well was indeed the Christ who was to come, and would save them also from sin.

What a lesson for us! The end is upon us. Probation is closing. The world's doom impends. The vengeance of God is soon to fall on the shelterless heads of sinners. The time for rescue is almost over. Why should not every member in every church who believes the solemn truths of the gospel for this time, do as did the woman of Sychar,— go out into the highways and hedges, and with constraining love compel souls to come in?

In this record of Christ's talk with the woman of Sychar we have another of the many instances in which he did personal work for souls. While he often spoke to the multitude, he frequently was found with the one soul. See him with the man born blind, with Nicodemus by night, with the woman of Canaan, with Zaccheus on his way through Jericho.

This spirit he imparted to his followers. The man from the tombs whom he healed he bade: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Think of

the home-coming of this poor man, and the joy which must have taken possession of his friends as they witnessed his changed life.

Some of the disciples began work with their friends and relatives. "Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathanael. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends, and neighbors. There are those who for a lifetime have professed to be acquainted with Christ, yet who have never made a personal effort to bring even one soul to the Saviour. They leave all the work for the minister. He may be well qualified for his calling, but he cannot do that which God has left for the members of the church.

"There are many who need the ministration of loving Christian hearts. Many have gone down to ruin who might have been saved if their neighbors, common men and women, had put forth personal effort for them. Many are waiting to be personally addressed. In the very family, the neighborhood, the town where we live, there is work for us to do as missionaries for Christ. If we are Christians, this work will be our delight."—"*The Desire of Ages*," *p. 141.*

Inspired by the noble example of the woman from Sychar, let us go among our relatives, friends, and neighbors, and tell them of the blessings of the Christian life, and the joys which await the faithful.

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XI

A Recruiting Station

ONE writer has said that to the Apostles' Creed he would add, "I believe in the conversion of children." The history of Christianity shows that many of its most devoted workers were converted in early life. Count Zinzendorf was converted at four years of age. David Livingstone gave his heart to Christ early in life. So did Isaac Watts and Bishop McCabe. We could mention many others also.

One source of recruits for the church is the young people. If a love for souls burns in the hearts of our church officers and teachers, and all others who come especially in contact with the young, we may see a continual procession of the youth brought to Christ, and become strong members of the church and workers in the cause.

The need of doing personal work for the young was impressed on my mind recently by reading of the following incident: —

"A minister was called to conduct the funeral services of a young girl who was a stranger to him. He went to her Sunday school super-

intendent and asked, 'Was Minnie a Christian?' 'Really, I don't know,' replied the superintendent. 'She has attended Sunday school for several years, and I have often thought that I should like to ask her, but never did.' Then the minister went to her teacher and said, 'Was Minnie a Christian?' The teacher replied sadly, 'I don't know. I have often thought that if ever I got her alone, I would talk to her, but never did.' The minister then called upon the mother, and repeated the question, 'Was Minnie a Christian?' 'I don't know,' replied the weeping woman. 'She went to Sunday school, and I thought the teacher and the superintendent ought to talk to her. I never seemed to be able to say anything to her on the subject.'"

I have wondered if a condition similar to this exists in any of our Sabbath schools or churches. Should a member of one of our Sabbath school classes die, would we know at the funeral whether or not he was a Christian? We may know he came from a Sabbath-keeping home, and attended church and Sabbath school, but that does not make him a Christian. Young people need a change of heart. To be saved, they must be converted. I believe we are under as sacred obligations to God to find out the spiritual condition of those in our churches and to labor personally to bring them to Christ, as we are to work for those who make no profes-

sion of religion. Sometime the Lord will ask us where our beautiful flock is, and we shall have to render an account to him for their souls.

The following from a little book, "The Master Workman," reveals the sad consequences of the neglect of personal work: —

"Mrs. Barney, the prison worker, went to a certain city to speak. She was met at the railway station by the lady who was to entertain her. She went to the home of her hostess in an old rattletrap carriage, driven by a red-nosed young man. When Mrs. Barney stepped inside the door of the home, her hostess apologized for the appearance of carriage and driver, explaining that she did not feel free to employ any other, and said, 'O Mrs. Barney, will you not kneel here with me and pray for that driver?' After the prayer she told Mrs. Barney the story.

"Several years before she had been given a class of five boys in the Sunday school of her church. These boys had been gathered in from the streets. She thought it her duty to entertain the boys by telling them stories during the lesson hour, and when the matter of their personal salvation would be pressed home on her, she would say, 'Oh, that isn't my business; that's the pastor's work!' After a time she moved to another city and was compelled to give up her class. During her residence in that city she came to a new vision of Christ. Then

she began to realize that she had lost a golden opportunity in that she had neglected to teach the Bible in such a way as to lead those boys to a personal knowledge of Christ.

"Five years afterward she returned to the city and inquired for her boys. No one in the church knew anything about them. One day she found this young man driving a cab, and he was under the influence of liquor. When she asked him about the other boys, he said, 'O lady! two of us are dead, and two of us in prison, and I'm the only one left.' She begged him to sign the pledge and become a Christian, but he said, 'No, lady; there was a time when I would have done anything for you, but it's too late now — too late now.'"

Two dead, two in prison, and one a drunken cab driver, and all probably *lost forever!* What a sad awakening for their teacher! There was a time when she could have done anything with those five boys, but she neglected her opportunity. She taught them, but did no personal work for them spiritually. Now they are lost.

Oh, how terrible it will be to see in the lake of fire any who might be in paradise had we spoken to them about their souls!

Do you suppose there are any who were once in our churches or Sabbath schools or young people's societies, who are now away from Christ, perhaps forever beyond our reach,

because we failed to labor personally for their salvation?

Here is another extract from the same book, which serves to press home this lesson: —

"During the great simultaneous revival campaign in the city of Philadelphia, Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, at a noonday meeting in the Garrick theater, read a letter from a well-known evangelist in which he said that while conducting a morning meeting in a certain city a tramp came in and sat down in a pew. During the service this tramp stood up and said: —

"'My father and mother used to sit in this pew. It is the first church I ever attended. My father was an officer in this church. Seven boys used to sit in this pew in the Sunday school class. We had a great love and respect for our teacher. Saturday afternoon she invited us to her house for an entertainment of music, eatables, and a look over the lesson. After a while, being anxious to please us and hold us, she brought out a pack of cards and taught us the names of the different cards. None of us had ever used cards, but we became enthusiastic over them, and soon learned the game.

"'Then we said, "Do not give so much time to the lesson, but let us have more time for playing cards, and teach us some more tricks." After a while we got a pack of our own, and were off in the cotton gins playing cards and

not going to her home. Later we failed to go to Sunday school. Cards and cigarettes were followed by drink and gambling. We all, at different times, left our homes. Two of these boys have been hanged, three are in State prison for life, one is a vagabond like myself. No one knows where he is, and if the authorities knew I were here I would be arrested and put behind the bars. All I wish is that that teacher had never taught us to play cards.'

"As he stood there broken-hearted, a lady near the pulpit, dressed in mourning, arose, went to where the man was, fell on the floor, and said, 'O God! I am the Sunday-school teacher that did it!' She fainted, but revived, and was not seen in the meeting again."

What a terrible experience it would be to have a tramp come like that into a Seventh-day Adventist church, and tell how he used to sit in a certain pew with his parents, and attend the Sabbath school and the Missionary Volunteer meetings, but through lack of consecration in the life of his teacher or through her lack of personal interest in her pupils, he was now a vagabond, hunted through the earth by the police, and with no hope of the life beyond! This thought ought to startle us, and arouse us to greater diligence in the future. Of course we do not play cards, and would not teach the children anything about them, but

there may be something else in our lives that is exerting a wrong influence and leading away from Christ. There is a solemn appeal in this to us as Christians to put forth superhuman personal effort for the genuine conversion of every member of our churches and Sabbath schools.

The salvation of souls should be the mission of every church. Every pupil in the Sabbath school will either be saved or be lost. Not all who belong to our Missionary Volunteer Societies are converted. In a measure their destiny is in our hands.

I was interested the other day in reading about the Lord's telling Peter that from henceforth he should "catch men,"— catch them alive in the gospel net, like fish. This same word is used but one other time in the Bible, in 2 Tim. 2:26, where it speaks of some one's being "taken captive" by the devil at his will, that is, "taken alive" in the net of sin.

Every one is taken alive, either by the Lord or by the devil. Surely the church should be a place where the young are "taken captive" for the Lord. While we are doing nobly in raising funds for China and India and Korea, and other parts of the world, we must remember that our own children are just as valuable as any child in Korea or China, or as any of the Hindu boys or girls; and while putting forth efforts for the salvation of those in distant

lands, we must not neglect the salvation of those near us. The enemy is watching to take them alive and destroy them. Our work as teachers is to disentangle our boys and girls from the web of sin, and take them alive for God, to present to the Master when he shall come.

The story is told of a famous statue in the Fine Arts Gallery in Paris. It was the work of a man who, like many other geniuses, had struggled with poverty. His room in a garret served for both studio and sleeping-room. "One midnight, when the statue was just finished, a sudden frost fell upon Paris. The sculptor lay awake in his fireless garret, and thought of the still moist clay, thought how the water in it would freeze, and the dream of his life would be destroyed in a night. So the old man rose from his cot, wrapped his bed clothes reverently about the statue, and lay down to his sleep. In the morning the neighbors found him lying dead. His life had gone out into his work."

Similar devotion on the part of every Christian would result in the salvation of many souls.

To look upon our neighbors, friends, and kindred whom we dearly love, and know that in a few brief years, if unsaved, they must be left without any hope in God, and with all the tribes of the earth mourn as they see the Son

of man and all the angelic host come in glory and power, is most solemn and appalling. To view the ruin of one city shocks the sensibilities; but to meditate upon the ruin of every city, ruin world-wide and indescribable, when the "slain of the Lord" will be "from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth," when the "foundations of the earth" will shake, mountains be moved out of their places, and islands disappear, causes the heart to cry to God for a hiding place in that dreadful hour, not for ourselves alone, but also for others. We cannot find refuge in the ark alone, and be saved; we must take some one with us. We *must* do our best for the unsaved.

The Best

"Christ wants the best. He in the far-off ages
Once claimed the firstlings of the flock, the finest of the wheat;
And still he asks his own with gentlest pleading
To lay their highest hopes and brightest talents at his feet.
He'll not forget the feeblest service, humblest love,
He only asks that from our store we give to him
The best we have.

"Christ gives the best. He takes the hearts we offer,
And fills them with his glorious beauty, joy, and peace;
And in his service as we're growing stronger,
The calls to grand achievement still increase.
The richest gifts for us on earth, or in the heaven above,
Are hid with Christ in God. In Jesus we receive
The best we have.

"And is our best too much? O friends, let us remember
How once our Lord poured out his soul for us;
And in the prime of his mysterious manhood
Gave up his precious life upon the cross!
The Lord of lords, by whom the worlds were made,
Through bitter grief and tears gave us
The best he had."

XII

Prayer and Soul Winning

A PRAYERLESS life will never be a soul-winning life. Before we can prevail with men, we must first, like Jacob, prevail with God. Study the lives of the great soul-winners, and you will find that they were ever men of prayer. Moses was a man of prayer. So was the great apostle Paul. His writings abound in exhortations to prayer and earnest supplication that the word of God may have free course and be glorified.

Jesus prayed. When those sick with divers diseases and controlled by devils, pressed about him to be healed, we read that "in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." He sometimes left the throng about him, who were seeking the blessing of healing, and "withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed."

Just before that great transfiguration scene, Jesus had taken some of his disciples with him and had gone up into the mountain to pray, and from this season of refreshing he went forth to bless and help the people.

"Only the man with the yearning soul is of any account with the evangel. If he can sleep nights and be content days, whether men heed his message or not, it proves that he has a strong heart. Whatever outward perfections he has, they are those of a marble statue, and not a living man. Why are we not burning with the zeal that consumed our Master and sent him to nights of prayer and Gethsemanes of anguish?"

Prayer opens the channel of communication between the soul and God, and prepares us to reach the unsaved; and until we have prevailed with God, we cannot hope to prevail with men.

"Let the worker for Christ remember that he is not to labor in his own strength. Let him lay hold of the throne of God with faith in his power to save. Let him wrestle with God in prayer, and then work with all the facilities God has given him. The Holy Spirit is provided as his efficiency. Ministering angels will be by his side to impress hearts."—"*Christ's Object Lessons*," *p. 232.*

"Why do not believers feel a deeper, more earnest concern for those who are out of Christ? Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another?"—"*Testimonies for the Church*," *Vol. VII, p. 21.*

"It is only when we can say, and mean it, 'Give me souls, or I die,' will the yearning heart have irresistible power over souls. Never until one realizes the value of a soul and the price at which it was purchased, and never until a love as intense and personal as that of a brother burns in our souls and leads us to importunate prayer and earnest supplication, shall we be much used in the saving of the lost."

Wesley had his "prayer room," where he sought God for power before appearing before the people. See John Knox on his knees pleading for Scotland, "Give me Scotland, or I die!" The soul must travail in the secret places if we would reach the hard, adamantine heart.

The biographer of David Brainerd writes of him: "He was, as all Christ's true men and women must be, mighty in prayer. It was his habit to spend long nights in the dark forests, with strong cryings to God, a very wrestling with the Almighty for the salvation of sinners. His whole life seems to have been divided between preaching and prayer, hastening to the woods, after some discouragement, to meet his Lord for renewal of faith and confidence, or, with a whole heartful of thanksgiving, casting himself on the ground and crying, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.'"

Finney was a man of prayer. We are told that there were times in his experience when he slept in a barn that he might have more freedom in praying and supplicating God in behalf of the lost.

It is said of Robert Hall of Leicester that he would come from his vestry so weak from struggling in prayer before God that he would have to hold on to his pulpit when he stood to preach. But as he proceeded with the sermon, the people, it is said, would rise in their seats unconsciously and come streaming up the aisles, crowding around the pulpit.

The family altar is a powerful appeal to the young. The memory of the time when father and mother gathered us for prayer when we were children, can never be effaced. It lives with us in the frozen regions of the north, or in the heat of the torrid zone. A noted Christian worker was asked, "What led you to Christ?" His answer was, "My father's prayers at the family altar. They followed me through my manhood and compelled me to accept Christ." When the family altar is gone, one of the strong foundations of the home is gone. Better far, to sacrifice anything else than the practice of prayer in the home.

It was the prayers of godly parents that led Matthew Simpson into the ministry. Professor F. L. Pattee says of him:—

"One cannot, if he will, escape the compulsion of a mother's prayers. Bishop Matthew Simpson tells very feelingly of the forces that led him into the Christian ministry. He was an awkward boy, harsh and halting of speech, and he trembled at the thought of an audience, yet as he approached manhood the conviction somehow became deeper and deeper within him that he ought to preach the gospel. But the difficulties seemed so insuperable that he gave up all plans of entering the ministry, and began upon a course in medicine. Three years he was in the medical college, and in all that time the voice within him kept crying, 'Enter the ministry; enter the ministry.' It hounded him day and night. He prayed over it in agony of soul, but he could not bring himself to take the step. The cost seemed too great.

"His mother was a widow, wholly dependent upon her son, and the call asked him to give up his medical profession just as he was ready to practice, and begin a new three years of preparation. But at last, after agony and tears, he surrendered, and in bitterness of soul he went to break the news to his mother. Then the surprise of his life came to him. 'Never shall I forget,' he says, 'how my mother turned upon me with a smile and said, "My son, I have been looking for this hour ever since you were born." Then she told me how she and my

father — who was then a dying man — kneeled beside me in the cradle, consecrated me to God, and prayed that I might become a minister. And she added that not a day had passed but that the repetition of that prayer had mounted to the throne of God.'"—"*Compelled Men*," *pp. 36, 37.*

"Come to the morning prayer;
Come, let us kneel and pray:
Prayer is the Christian pilgrim's staff,
To walk with God all day.

"At noon, beneath the Rock
Of Ages, rest and pray;
Sweet is that shelter from the heat,
When the sun smites by day.

"At evening, shut thy door;
Round the home altar pray;
And, finding there the house of God,
At heaven's gate close the day.

"When midnight veils our eyes,
Oh, it is sweet to say,
'I sleep, but my heart waketh, Lord,
With thee to watch and pray.'"

An evangelist was once asked for suggestions as to the best methods of promoting a revival. He said, "Go home, get into your closet, and stay there until you are revived." This blunt instruction contains the secret of conducting a successful revival either personally or as a church. If all the members of the church do

this, the church will be revived. Are you cold and lifeless, praying a little from a sense of duty rather than from a longing of the soul for closer communion with God; praying short, formal prayers; feeling you hardly have time to pray when there is so much to do? To your closet, O man! and the God who seeth in secret will reward you openly. Victory obtained in the closet will be seen in the life.

Is there a need in the church? Is the prayer meeting waning? Is the missionary meeting dead? Is a spiritual paralysis creeping over you? Are some backsliding and losing their first love? Is the withering hand of covetousness getting a grip on some who once were faithful in rendering to the Lord that which belongs to him? Are there worshipers of Mammon rather than worshipers of God to be found in the church? Are some of the youth drifting with the world's tide of pleasure and sin, and being ensnared by the wiles of the wicked one, and do you find yourself unable to hold them spiritually? If so, *pray*. You can do nothing until you have fervently and earnestly prayed. Confess your own coldness and unfaithfulness and lack of zeal, and supplicate the throne of God for deliverance for yourself and your brethren. Do not let go of the arm of God too soon. Pray through to victory. Like Elijah, continue until the cloud appears, and the re-

viving shower falls, and the spiritual drouth is ended.

Touching Pentecost, we are told that "when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Prayer first, then the shaking!

Back of every revival it will be found that some one has been praying. Before Pentecost they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Continued prayer, then Pentecost — this is God's order. Nothing will remove the spiritual torpor and bring life among the dry bones, like supplicating the throne of God. Prayer will do it, but nothing else will.

"Upon the mountain all alone,
Or on the stormy sea,
He sees, he knows our every need;
He hears our earnest plea.

"When trials of life come thick and fast
And tempests blow awry,
A careful vigil still he keeps
With ever-watchful eye.

"Surrounded by satanic hosts,
Or hottest furnace glare,
When no one else is there to help,
He hears and answers prayer."

We read of a preacher who had been appointed to a church, the spiritual life of which

was very low. It was harvest time; the weather was hot; but to a small congregation he announced a prayer meeting to be held on Monday morning at sunrise, in the church, for a revival and the conversion of sinners. The pastor spent that night in prayer. He fell asleep shortly before daybreak. When he awoke the sun was just rising. Looking toward the church, he saw the people crowding in; teams filled the streets. God had heard prayer. Some who had not known of the meeting had hitched up their teams and driven to town. As a result, many were converted.

The mighty work of foreign missions, which is bringing the light of the gospel to the benighted millions of the earth, was born in a haystack prayer meeting. When Samuel J. Mills and his four companions prayed during a thunderstorm one August evening, in the shelter of a haystack, the greatest movement since Pentecost was launched. Something took place in heaven. God heard prayer. Prayer, then missions!

After a careful study of modern missions, the *Missionary Review* has this to say: "From the day of Pentecost, there has been not one great spiritual awakening in any land which has not begun in a union of prayer, though only among two or three; no such outward, upward movement has continued after such

prayer meetings have declined; and it is in exact proportion to the maintenance of such joint and believing supplication and intercession that the word of the Lord in any land or locality has had free course and been glorified."

The strength of our mission work is not in the number of laborers in the field, or in the amount of gold and silver in the treasury, but in the earnest prayers which are ascending to God from devoted hearts that fear nothing but sin.

"Mr. Moody tells of one of the most memorable hours in his life when unexpectedly he had crossed the ocean and was in England without any intent of holding a religious service. One Saturday, at noon, he had gone into the meeting in Exeter Hall, on the Strand. At the close a minister greeted him, and asked him to come and preach for him the next morning. Mr. Moody said: 'I went to the morning service and found a large church filled with people; and when the time came, I began to speak, but it seemed the hardest task of my life. There was no response from the audience. They seemed as if carved out of stone or ice. I was having a struggle all the time, and wished myself in some other place, but I had promised to speak also at night.

"'At night it was the same thing,— house filled, people outwardly respectful, but no interest or response. When about half way through my sermon, there came a change. It seemed as if the windows of heaven had opened; and a bit of breath blew down. The atmosphere of the building seemed to change; people's faces changed. It impressed me so that when I finished speaking, I gave the invitation for those who wanted to be Christians to rise, and to my immense surprise the people got up in groups. I turned to the minister and said, "What does this mean?" He said, "I do not know, I am sure." "Well," I said, "they misunderstood me, and I will explain what I meant." So I announced an aftermeeting in the room below, explaining who were invited, — only those who wanted to be Christians,— and then dismissed the service.'

"They went to the lower room, and the people came crowding, filling all available space, — seats, aisles, and standing room. Mr. Moody talked again a few minutes, and then asked those who would be Christians to rise. This time he knew he had made his meaning clear. They rose again in groups and by scores. Mr. Moody says: 'I turned and said to the minister, "What does this mean?" He said, "I am sure I do not know."' Then the minister said to Mr. Moody: 'What'll I do with these people?

I do not know what to do with them. This is something new.' He replied: 'Well, I'd announce a meeting for tomorrow night and Tuesday night, and see what comes of it. I am going across to Dublin;' and he went, but he had hardly stepped off the boat when a cablegram was handed him from the minister, saying: 'Come back at once. The church is packed.'

"So he went back, and stayed ten days. The result of those ten days was that four hundred souls were added to that church, and that every church near by felt the impulse of this great revival.

"What was the explanation of that marvelous Sunday and the days following? There was some secret hidden beneath the surface. Mr. Moody discovered it. A member of the church, a woman, had been taken sick some time before; then she grew worse; then the physician told her that she would not recover, but that she would likely be shut in her room for years. She began to think of the deep meaning of this affliction. She thought of her life, and said, 'How little I have done for God! Practically nothing, and now what can I do shut in here?' Then she said: 'I can pray; I can pray for my church; I can pray for the manifestation of God's Holy Spirit.' Then after every service she asked those who returned home if there was any special word concerning

the work in the church. One Sunday noon her sister came in from service and asked, 'Who do you think preached today?' 'I do not know. Who?' 'Why, a stranger from America, a man called Moody, I think.'

"The sick woman's face turned a bit whiter, her eyes looked scared, her lip trembled, and she said: 'I know what that means. There is something coming to the old church. Do not bring me any dinner. I must spend this afternoon in prayer.' And so she did. That night in the service the startling change came. Afterward she told Mr. Moody himself how, nearly two years before, there came into her hands a copy of a paper that told of Mr. Moody and his work. She was led to pray that God would send that man into their church in London, and every day of her life for two years this had been her prayer; and now, by a seeming strange coincidence, God had answered, and abundantly answered, in the salvation of hundreds of souls."

O the blessing which comes from interceding with God for lost souls! It is said that in a little town in Scotland the Christian people spent one whole night in prayer, and the following day a revival began, and five hundred persons were converted.

More than a century ago a number of students in a great university rose early each morning during the winter and interceded with

God for a revival. As the result it is said that every student in the university surrendered to Christ.

"Dr. J. G. K. McClure tells about an invalid woman residing in Springfield, Ill., who had been bedridden for seventeen years, and was almost helpless. For many years she had been praying to God in a general way to save souls. One day she asked for pen and paper. She wrote down the names of fifty-seven acquaintances. She prayed for each of these by name three times a day. She wrote them letters, telling them of her interest in them. She also wrote to Christian friends, in whom she knew these persons had confidence, and urged them to speak to these persons about their souls' welfare, and to do their best to persuade them to repent and believe. She had unquestioning faith in God. In her humble, earnest dependence upon him, she thus interceded for the unsaved. In time every one of those fifty-seven persons avowed faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour."

In every church there should be found those who, like this woman, are praying for a revival among their neighbors and friends.

The power of fervent prayer from the heart of a sincere Christian, is emphasized by the following touching incident: —

"'No,' said the lawyer, 'I shall not press your claim against that man; you can get some one else to take the case, or you can withdraw it, just as you please.'

"'Think there isn't any money in it?'

"'There would probably be a little money in it, but it would come, as you know, from the sale of the little house the man occupies and calls his "home." And I don't want to meddle with the matter.'

"'Got frightened out of it, eh?'

"'Not at all.'

"'I reckon the old fellow begged to get off?'

"'Well, yes; he did.'

"'And you gave in, I suppose?'

"'Well, yes.'

"'What did you do?'

"'I believe I shed a few tears.'

"'The old fellow begged you hard, you say?'

"'No, he didn't speak to me.'

"'Well, may I ask whom he did address?'

"'His Father in heaven.'

"'He took to praying, did he?'

"'Yes; not for my benefit, however. After finding the little house, I knocked on the outer door, which stood ajar, but no one heard me, so I stepped into the little hall, and looked through the crevice of the door into the sitting-room, and there, upon the bed, with her silver head high on the pillows, was an old lady who

looked just as my mother did when I last saw her. I was going to knock again, when she said, "Come, father, begin: I am ready now." So down on his knees went the silver-haired man; and I couldn't have knocked then for the life of me.

"'Well, he began: first, he reminded God that they were still his submissive children, mother and he, and no matter what he saw fit to bring upon them, they would not rebel against his will. Of course, it was going to be hard for them to go out homeless in their old age, especially with poor mother so sick and helpless; but still they had seen sadder things than that. But O, how different it might now be had even one of their boys been spared to them! Then his voice somewhat broke, and a thin white hand stole from under the coverlet, and moved softly over his snow-white head. Then he went on to repeat that nothing could be so sad again as the parting with their three sons, unless mother and he should be separated. But at last he fell to comforting himself with the fact that the gracious Lord knew that it was no fault of their own that mother and he were threatened with the loss of their little home, which to them meant beggary and the almshouse — a place they prayed the Lord to deliver them from entering, if consistent with his will. Then he quoted a number of promises

concerning the safety of them that put their trust in the Lord. Yes, I should say he begged hard. In fact, it was the most thrilling plea to which I ever listened. And in conclusion, he prayed for God's blessing upon those who were about to demand justice.'

"Pausing a moment in silence, the lawyer continued slowly, 'And I believe I would rather go to the poorhouse myself than stain my heart and hands with the blood of such prosecution as that.'

"'Little afraid to defeat that prayer, eh?'

"'Bless your soul, man, you could not defeat that prayer. I tell you, he left it all subject to the will of God; yet he did not fail to make known his desires, claiming that we had been commanded to make our requests known unto God. But of all the pleading I ever heard, that was the most impressive. You see, I was taught that kind of thing myself in my childhood; and why I was sent there to hear that prayer, I am sure I don't know, but I hand the case over.'

"'I wish you hadn't told me about the old man's prayer,' said the client, uneasily.

"'Why not?' asked the lawyer.

"'Well, because I greatly desire the money that the little place would bring. But, like you, I also was taught the Bible straight enough when I was a youngster, and I hate to run

counter to what you have just related. I wish you hadn't heard a word of it, and another time I wouldn't listen to petitions not intended for my ears.'

"The lawyer smilingly said: 'You are wrong again, my dear fellow; it was intended for my ears, and yours, too; and God intended it. I remember hearing my aged mother sing about God moving in a mysterious way.'

"'Well, my mother also used to sing the same,' said the client, as he twisted the claim papers in his fingers. 'You can call there in the morning, if you like, and tell "mother and him" the claim has been met.'

"'In a mysterious way,' added the lawyer, smiling."

God has met many claims for those who pray. Today, as ever, prayer touches hearts and brings about great changes.

The life of prayer lived by George Müller of Bristol, England, who fed, clothed, and housed many thousands of orphans with funds which came in answer to prayer, is familiar to many. The following incident in the life of this remarkable man, told by the captain of an ocean liner, shows the confidence which he had in prayer in the common experiences of life: —

"In crossing the ocean on one of our voyages, my whole life was revolutionized. We had on

board a man of God, George Müller, of Bristol. I had been on the bridge for twenty-two hours, and never left it. I was startled by some one tapping me on the shoulder. It was George Müller.

"'Captain,' he said, 'I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon.' This was Wednesday.

"'It is impossible,' I said.

"'Very well, if your ship can't take me, God will find some other way. I have never broken an engagement for fifty-seven years.'

"'I would willingly help you. How can I? I am helpless.'

"'Let us go down into the chartroom and pray.'

"I looked at that man of God and thought to myself, 'What lunatic asylum could that man have come from? I never heard of such a thing.'

"'Mr. Müller,' I said, 'do you know how dense this fog is?'

"'No,' he replied, 'my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God, who controls every circumstance of my life.'

"He knelt down, and he prayed one of the most simple prayers. I muttered to myself, 'That would suit a children's class where the children were not more than eight or nine years

old.' The burden of his prayer was something like this: 'O Lord, if it is consistent with thy will, please remove this fog in five minutes. You know the engagement you made for me in Quebec for Saturday. I believe it is your will.'

"When he had finished, I was going to pray, but he put his hand on my shoulder, and told me not to pray. 'First, you do not believe he will; and second, I believe he has, and there is no need whatever for you to pray about it.' I looked at him, and George Müller said this: 'Captain, I have known my Lord for fifty-seven years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to gain an audience with the King. Get up, Captain, and open the door, and you will find the fog is gone.'

"I got up, and the fog was indeed gone.

"You tell this to some people of a scientific turn of mind, and they will say, 'That is not according to natural laws.' No, but it is according to spiritual laws. The God with whom we have to do is omnipotent. Hold on to God's omnipotence. Ask believingly.' On Saturday afternoon, I might add, George Müller was in Quebec on time."

It is encouraging to know that God is just as willing to hear us pray as he was to hear George Müller. Why should not such experiences as these give us faith to pray for the unconverted, and expect their conversion?

Prayer

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

"Prayer is the sinner's contrite voice
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice
And cry, 'Behold, he prays!'

"No prayer is made by man alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the eternal throne,
For mourners intercedes.

"O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The life, the truth, the way,
The path of prayer thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray!"

XIII

The Power of Song in Soul Winning

"At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

"A song of praise from an inner prison;
The feet of the singers fast in the stocks!"

Many times I have thought how I should have enjoyed hearing that song. The prisoners heard it. They heard a real song, sung from the hearts of men who feared God. It was not a fantastic creation set to ragtime music, nor an operatic performance of which it was impossible to understand a single word or even to be fully sure in what tongue it was sung, to which these prisoners listened, but a soulful song of praise.

There is power in song when rendered with the spirit and with the understanding also. But real, soul-stirring music is decadent in many churches. Hired performers, and "paid minstrels from Egypt," have taken the place to far too great an extent, of Christian singers, and the heavenly melody which can open hearts and bring men to Christ is seldom heard in the popular churches.

There is great power in a simple hymn sung from the heart. Many have been converted by the effective power of a song sung in the simplicity of a converted heart.

It is related that a party was one night sailing on a steamer down the Potomac River. A gentleman on board had been entertaining and delighting the party by singing many beautiful hymns. Among others was "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," which he sang with such fervor and power that a deep hush fell upon all present. When the musical notes of the song had died away, a gentleman approached the singer and said: —

"Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?"

"Yes, sir," the man of song answered, "I fought under General Grant."

"Well," the first speaker continued with something like a sigh, "I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed am quite sure, I was near you one bright night eighteen years ago this very month. It was such a night as this. If I am not mistaken, you were on guard duty. We of the South had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my hand — the shadows hid me. Your beat led you into the clear light.

"As you paced back and forth, you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart, and I had been selected by our commander for the work because I was a sure shot. Then out upon the night floated the words,—

"'Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing.'

Your prayer was answered. I couldn't fire after that. And there was no attack made upon your camp that night. I felt sure when I heard you sing this evening that you were the man whose life I was spared from taking."

The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with much emotion, "I remember the night very well, and distinctly the feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat, thinking of home and friends and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that he has created came to me with peculiar force. If he so cares for the sparrow, how much more for man created in his own image; and I sang the prayer of my heart, and ceased to feel alone.

"How the prayer was answered I never knew until this evening. My heavenly Father thought best to keep this knowledge from me

for eighteen years. How much of his goodness to us we shall be ignorant of until it is revealed by the light of eternity! 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul,' has been a favorite hymn; now it will be inexpressibly dear."

Those to whom God has given the talent of music, and a voice which can sweetly and expressively render the hymns of Zion, have indeed a great gift. There is no more effective agency by which to move the hearts of men to give themselves to Christ than the words of some simple melody, sung from a heart in which the love of God reigns.

While music and sacred songs are a strong factor in reaching the heart, they are often an agency for evil. Satan seems to have been a great musician in heaven, the leader of the heavenly choir. We read of his "tabrets" and his "pipes." And well he knows how to make music serve his purposes. Many gatherings of professed church members, especially of young people, are destructive of spirituality, not only because of the thoughtless way in which many sacred songs are sung, but also because of the cheap and trifling music rendered there.

"Eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the rolls the words and acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assem-

bled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping."—"*Testimonies for the Church*," *Vol. I, pp. 505, 506.*

Again we read, "Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their [the youth's] taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should have been devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace, while humbly making known his wants, and with strong cries and tears pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of the evil one."—*Id., p. 497.*

As Christians we should sing, as we are instructed to speak, that which will edify, and minister grace to those who listen. Holy song poured forth from a consecrated heart has often been the means of turning a sinner from sin to holiness, and such singing may be a powerful

factor in evangelistic efforts. How often we can recall from our own experience times when, under the influence of some song, our hearts have been touched and the tears have flowed! The tones may not have been perfect, but they have voiced the sentiments of the heart, and the song has brought a blessing into the soul.

"Thirty men, red-eyed and disheveled, lined up before a judge of the San Francisco police court. It was the regular morning company of 'drunks and disorderlies.' Some were old and hardened, others hung their heads in shame. Just as the momentary disorder attending the bringing in of the prisoners quieted down, a strange thing happened. A strong, clear voice from below began singing: —

"'Last night I lay a-sleeping,
There came a dream so fair.'

"Last night! It had been for them all a nightmare or a drunken stupor. The song was such a contrast to the horrible fact that no one could fail of a sudden shock at the thought the song suggested.

"'I stood in old Jerusalem,
Beside the temple there,'—

the song went on. The judge had paused. He made a quiet inquiry. A former member of a famous opera company, known all over the country, was awaiting trial for forgery. It was he who was singing in his cell. During his

imprisonment he had surrendered his heart to God, and been washed from his sins in the blood of the Son of God.

"Meantime the song went on, and every man in the line showed emotion. One or two dropped on their knees; one boy at the end of the line, after a desperate effort at self-control, leaned against the wall, buried his face against his folded arms, and sobbed, 'O mother, mother!'

"The sobs, cutting to the very heart the men who heard, and the song, still welling its way through the courtroom, blended in the hush.

"At length one man protested. 'Judge,' said he, 'have we got to submit to this? We're here to take our punishment, but this—' he, too, began to sob.

"It was impossible to proceed with the business of the court, yet the judge gave no order to stop the song. The police sergeant, after an effort to keep the men in line, stepped back and waited with the rest. The song moved on to its climax:—

> "'Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
> Sing, for the night is o'er!
> Hosanna in the highest!
> Hosanna forevermore!'

"In an ecstasy of melody the last words rang out, and then there was silence.

"The judge looked into the faces of the men before him. There was not one who was not

touched by the song; not one in whom some better impulse was not stirred. He did not call the cases singly—a kind word of advice, and he dismissed them all. No man was fined or sentenced to the workhouse that morning. The song had done more good than punishment could possibly have accomplished."

XIV

Building for Eternity

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

There are many honorable occupations. To be a great educator and help to mold the minds of the youth, is honorable. To be an honest business man, is good. To be a skilled mechanic and be able to make beautiful things, is to be desired. To be a great engineer or an architect, and be able to put tunnels under the sea or bring into existence imposing edifices, is to engage in an honorable work. To be an artist and paint pictures that will excite admiration in those who view them, is a distinction to be coveted. To be able to chisel from marble the form of an angel is a talent worth cultivating.

All these and a thousand other occupations are good and have their reward. But we know of no other work, for the reward of which our minds are directed to the enduring heavens, nor one so honorable, as that of saving souls.

Those who give their life to this work will shine "as the stars forever and ever."

We have only one natural life to live. If we fail in that, all is lost. And fail we must, unless we connect by faith with the Source of all life, so that his perfect life, his high ideals, his glorious achievements, shall appear instead of our sin-marred lives, our low ideals, our dismal failures.

It is a great thing simply to have human existence, but it involves a correspondingly great responsibility. Before each of us is a duty; we cannot escape it; we must meet it. Let us meet it, not in our own strength, but in his.

I wish I could emphasize the dignity and possibilities of human life. The moral nature of man, with its great responsibility, has long been recognized. We find it in one of the oldest writings in existence—the book of Job. "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." We did not come up from protoplasmic cells, through apes, as some affirm, but were created moral beings, responsible to our Creator, for "it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves."

Many are inclined to make a great deal of ancestry; to look for royal blood, which only a very few can claim. But the fact that man was directly created a moral being points not merely a few but all to an origin more honor-

able and noble than any royal ancestry. The fact that "the Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life," linked with the thought of moral accountability, lends dignity and value to human life as nothing else can.

We are created by the Spirit and given life by the Almighty, to whom we are accountable. What a wonderful fact that is! Back of our human ancestry is seen him for whose glory we were created, and who stands ready to work in and through us to the accomplishment of his divine purpose.

A human birth is a most important event. Great lights have sprung from the most unexpected sources. While births in great and distinguished families are especially chronicled and announced, who is able to decide which may be the greater when weighed in the scales of eternity, the child born in a palace, of a royal line, or the obscure babe born in a hovel? In either case a life has started upon a career which, if surrendered to God, may extend beyond the time when the heavens shall depart as a scroll when it is rolled together,— a life that may continue throughout endless ages, if one is wise and will submit his life to its Author, that it may be fashioned after the life of him who died that we might live through and in him. It has been said that we are the

architects of our own destiny, and so we are, in the sense that it is ours to make choice between our own human lives and his divine life; to decide between our human ancestry and adoption into the divine family. It may take only a moment to decide, but eternal issues are at stake.

A seemingly small thing may determine one's future. Great inventions have often been the result of accidental discoveries. In crossing the Rocky Mountains in Canada by rail, one climbs, through tunnels and over circuitous routes, thousands of feet, until the summit is reached. The place is marked by the words, "The Great Divide." From a little spring here, I am told, one part of the water goes west and finally finds its way into the broad waters of the Pacific Ocean; while the other takes a more easterly direction, and finally loses itself in the frozen waters of Hudson Bay. The pebbles which the water strikes as it issues from the mountain side may decide which course it will take, and its final destination.

So it is with us. Something like this may affect the current of our lives. We need to be constantly on guard, that we be not deflected from a right course and reach a wrong destination. Life's noblest aim is to labor for the salvation of others; we should not allow trifles to turn us away from it.

In view of the immense value and the eternal possibilities of life, it is a heinous crime to toss it carelessly into the balance of fate. To see a young man who has inherited a fortune wantonly squander it in prodigal ways, is sad; but how much sadder to see one prostitute to vain and foolish purposes the life received from God,— a life which has eternal realities and vast possibilities,— and at its sunset sit amid its desolate ruins, consumed by the worm of remorse!

What we do can never be undone. It is like prehistoric footprints in the stones. It is said, done, and written, and the record stands forever.

> "The moving finger writes,
> And having writ, moves on;
> Not all your piety, not wit,
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a line;
> Not all your tears wipe out a word of it."

There is an eternity before us. That is a wonderful word — eternity. None of us can comprehend its meaning. Its contemplation staggers the mind. One has said: "I am a baby at the thought of the word 'eternity;' I have racked this brain of mine in its poverty and its weakness, and have not the faintest conception of it, any more than I have of the omnipresence of Jehovah; yet one is as real as the other. It is the continuance of an ex-

istence that outnumbers the years as the Atlantic drops outnumber the drops of a brook; an existence whose ages are more than the stars that twinkled last night in the firmament — an existence interminable."

Yet it is this unfathomable expanse which stretches itself before us, for which we are to build. The use we make of the life we now have will determine our future. We must build on Christ, who is the only foundation. His Word is a rock. Determinedly and resolutely we should take our stand to make life a success in and through him. To do this we must be surrendered to him for the service, not of ourselves, but of others.

All that is cheap, that cannot be used in eternity, should be left behind. A single weak place in the character may permanently ruin the life given us of God. A great dam bursts, causing a flood which carries devastation and death in its wake; but it was the years of unnoticed seepage which preceded the flood that really caused the ruin. Because of this the dam failed in a crisis.

So it is ofttimes with men. The danger lies not so much in some strong sudden temptation, as in the little sin harbored through years preceding the supreme temptation. Because of this unsuspected moral leak, when the strain comes upon the character, it gives way.

The chances of recovery for a typhoid fever patient are greatly lessened if the heart is weak. Physicians tell us that a moderate drinker has but a slender hope in the crisis of pneumonia. So, to meet a moral crisis, the fiber of character must be daily strengthened by a firm trust and unswerving faith in God, by prayer and faithful building on the rock of Scripture. We must guard and strengthen the weak places. We must experience the victorious life, before we can lead others in the same way.

Life is not a material structure. It is character; the development of right principles. This is the greatest task man can undertake. In ancient games, men, to win a fading crown, cast aside every encumbrance, and every intemperate practice which tended to weaken physical powers. So it must be in the building of character. We must fight to win. We must train and discipline ourselves for the emergencies of life.

An engineer, running his train at the rate of sixty miles an hour, saw, as he rounded a curve, an obstruction on the track. Automatically, really quicker than thought, he threw the throttle wide open and crashed through the obstacle. When the train stopped, the passengers rushed out to see what was the trouble. Among them was an expert

who declared that no other course could have saved the train. "How did you do it?" he asked. "I didn't think," replied the engineer, "it did itself." He then told how for years he had planned that if ever he should be confronted by such an emergency, he would meet it as he did. Thus does training fit one for a crisis. Men need to be taught how to train the moral faculties, that when some overmastering temptation or momentous crisis in life comes, they will unconsciously do the right thing.

We frequently speak of certain men as being great capitalists. This expression is common in this age of fortunes. But we are all capitalists. If you will recount your talents and blessings, you will agree with this statement. You may not be a capitalist, perhaps, in money, but in that which is of infinitely greater worth than gold. You have health, speech, hearing, sight, and many other precious gifts and blessings. How much are these worth? Which of them would you exchange for the millions of Rockefeller or Carnegie? How much would you take to be deprived of the gift of speech or of sight? These are indeed great assets. They represent enormous capital, and should be wisely used in the work of soul-winning.

We are all building, either for time or for eternity. The temptation is to build upon that which we can *see;* to build for this world — for time. I admit it is not easy to withstand the allurements of the world. Worldly opportunities will invite us. The money god in some form is near us, seeking homage. Commercial prizes will be held before our eyes to dazzle us. Our noble ambitions will become inoculated with the fatal germ of selfishness, unless we are constantly on guard.

Annually, thousands of young people from schools and colleges, with worthy motives and laudable ambitions, are wrecked on the rocks and reefs of worldly ambition in the mad rush for the things of time. The principles of real manhood and womanhood will die within us unless we are made of superior stuff,—unless the character is forged by the Holy Spirit on the anvil of truth.

It is not easy to deny the demands of the carnal heart; it is not easy to deny ungodly and worldly lusts, and to live righteously and godly in this present world; it is not easy to row upstream or against wind and tide; it is not easy to face the sneers and frowns of an ungodly age; it is not easy to choose poverty and hardship instead of riches and honor; it is not easy to choose persecution and affliction with the people of God; it is not easy to face all these

in giving our lives to saving the lost: but it will pay to do it.

The prince of this world will take us, as he did our Master, up into the mountain, and show us the world and all its seeming glory. But remember the promise to those who win souls,—"As the stars forever and ever." Like Pilgrim, in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," we must stop our ears and run when the voice of this world is calling us to devote our energies to worldly pursuits.

Between those who build for time and those who build for eternity there is a striking contrast. The wise man truly declares: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." The reward of soul-winning is not given here, but in the beyond. The investment of time, talent, or money will result in souls redeemed for the kingdom. Soul-winning is building for eternity.

He who rules his spirit is the greatest of all conquerors. Alexander conquered the world, but was not able to conquer himself, and died in a drunken debauch. Napoleon waded through seas of blood to gratify an unholy ambition. For a time he was worshiped as a hero, but at last experienced the instability of earthly honor, and died in exile. Many kings and mighty men of the earth, who have

been satiated with the fame and honor of this world, have found it an empty thing at last. Sovereigns have been driven from their thrones, have abdicated, have committed suicide, have become insane, have perished in battle, have been made prisoners of war, have been assassinated, have been condemned to death and executed. Their lives did not flow out to water other lives, but were used for themselves, and the end was bitterness and irretrievable loss.

Louis XVI came to the throne of France shortly before the French Revolution, and although the country was greatly embarrassed financially, his court was filled with beauty and splendor. He flourished for a time, but his fame did not endure. In a little while those who had lauded him were calling for his life. His proud wife, the beautiful Marie Antoinette, rode to her execution bound in a cart and seated on a coffin which in a few minutes was to hold her dead body.

In the middle of the eleventh century there was a Mohammedan prince named Saladin. Ascending the throne of the ancient Pharaohs and guiding the Moslem armies, he rolled back the tide of European invasion. The wealth of the Orient was in his lap; the fate of millions hung upon his lips. But at last death, the common conqueror of all, came to smite the

crown from his brow and dash the scepter from his hand. As he lay upon his deathbed, looking back upon visions of earthly glory and forward to the future, his soul was overwhelmed with emotion.

Rousing himself from his reverie, the sultan said, "Prepare and bring me my winding sheet." It was brought and unfolded before him, and he gazed upon it long and earnestly. At last he said, "Bring here the banner around which my chosen guards have rallied in my victories." It was brought, and in silence the attendants awaited his further directions. He paused a moment, then said, "Remove those silken folds, and attach to the staff this winding sheet." It was done. As the dimmed eye of the dying man rested upon the emblem of mortality while it hung on the staff around which he had rallied his legions on the field of blood, he commanded, "Let the crier, accompanied by musicians playing a funeral dirge, pass through all the streets of the city, and at every corner wave the banner and proclaim, 'This is all that remains of Saladin's glory and power.'"

In a few brief hours this proud monarch was wrapped in his winding sheet, and not even a handful of dust now marks his resting place. The record of this ruler's life, as well as of many other kings and potentates of

earth, illustrates well the folly of using in the pursuit of earthly things the life and talents lent us of God. How much better it would be if in the kingdom souls whom they had led to Christ could greet them, happy in immortal joy!

When in Egypt the writer visited Luxor, the site of the ancient and beautiful city of Thebes, once one of the chief centers of civilization in Egypt. But the ravages of time are evident. Piles of brick and stone and sculptured images are about all that remain,— grim reminders of former greatness and power. Famous temples lie in ruins, mute witnesses of dynasties once great, but long since departed.

I went a few miles into the hills and visited the royal sepulchers. There in the rock had been hewn vast tombs in which the kings and rulers who lived before the days of Moses were laid to rest. Strange were my feelings as I went down into those sculptured passages, led by a guide with a tallow candle for light. I was deeply impressed with the folly of devoting one's life to things of this world. Most of the royal bodies have been removed. The walls of the tombs are covered with hieroglyphic characters, doubtless giving the history of the kings and of the times in which they lived. Here one walks amid eternal silence. The loneliness

of the place, with no signs of life, the dark passages and lofty chambers, impress one with a sense of the fleeting glory and transitory nature of all things earthly.

All that our eyes behold is transient, and warns us not to give our lives to the things of this world. Kingdoms, proud and magnificent, pass away. Their great men rest in forgotten graves. The most lofty monuments crumble into ruin. The ravages of time destroy proud cities, and blot from the knowledge of man the very places where once they stood in their glory. Great temples in which speechless deities once sat, lie in ruins, and the worship of their dumb images is a thing of the past.

Fortunes vanish. Earthquake, flame, and flood quickly sweep away the accumulated treasures of a lifetime. Riches take wings and flee away. Of all earthly things, money, perhaps, is loved the most; the money god is worshiped by many. Men stand at the mouth of the pit, and for gold deal out death by the dram. But the inspired writer has said, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver." A prize was once offered for the best definition of the word "money." It was awarded to a boy who defined it thus: "Money is that which will buy anything but happiness, and will admit us to any place except heaven."

Why give our lives, if Christians, to these earthly, perishing things? Why not give them to turning sinners to righteousness, that we may shine at last as the stars?

A man once said to a great millionaire, "You must be very happy, with all your millions." The great financier looked at him and answered, "Would you look after all my business for your board and clothes?" "Indeed I would not!" was the reply. "Well," said the millionaire, "that is all I get." He sleeps now, occupying but a few feet of earth, having left all his wealth behind.

A rich man on his deathbed was asked, "How much money does it take to satisfy a man?" "One dollar more," he feebly gasped as he relinquished his hold on all he had. Illustrations showing the vanity of earthly things could be multiplied. But one soul won, and saved in God's kingdom, is worth infinitely more than all these.

How different it is with those who work for God! Let us consider a few instances. The disciples of our Lord were humble men in the common walks of life; but they allied themselves with the Author of life, and became citizens of his kingdom. They forsook the corruptible crown, and strove for that which is incorruptible. They were whipped, stoned, beheaded, persecuted in every way, and the

wild beasts of the arena gnawed the bones of their followers.

I was never so stirred as when I stood in the Coliseum in the city of Rome, where some of God's people had been fed to wild beasts to amuse the spectators. I thought, Where are now the intoxicated devotees of pleasure who once sat in these seats?

I contrasted, as best I was able, the difference between those who perished in the arena and those who persecuted them to death. One built for time, the other for eternity. Rome, with her idols and abominations, went down. Of her subjects who sought for the fading laurels of this world, we know but little. Their short-lived fame was written in the books of oblivion. But the gospel went on, and the lives and work of the humble disciples of Jesus are known to the utmost limits of the world. Their acts are written in the Book of God with an inspired pen; and that Book has been translated into hundreds of languages, and scattered by the millions in every corner of the earth. They wrought with immortality in view. Their fame is secure for all time to come, and an incorruptible crown awaits them in the kingdom of God. The fisherman's garb will be exchanged for a garment of righteousness and love, to be worn

amid the glory of the world to come. Fishing for men is a great and glorious success.

Look at Moses. He was the foster son of Pharaoh's daughter, and heir to the Egyptian throne. Worldly pomp and the glitter of state were on every side. He was surrounded by a false religion, by the worship of insects, crocodiles, and other "sacred" animals. The corruptible crown was within easy reach. But he refused the throne and the crown, with all their accompanying riches, honor, and splendor. Looking across into the land of Goshen, he saw the despised Hebrews groaning under heavy burdens and toiling beneath the lash of taskmasters, and he chose "affliction with the people of God."

An earthly throne within his reach, Moses chose to give his life for others. He turned from the pomp and show and empty honor of Egypt's throne, and linked his destiny with that of the despised people of God, a company of slaves. His decision was firmly made; he decided that even the reproach of Christ was worth more than the wealth and honor of Egypt. He turned his back upon the fading crown of earth, and for forty years cared for sheep. Then for forty years more he was the leader of Israel through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

From a human standpoint the choice of Moses was that of a fool; but when he died, angels buried him; and as we see him some hundreds of years later, standing with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration, a type of the resurrected dead, we are profoundly convinced that the decision he made was a wise one.

Take the life of the great apostle Paul. He was a man of learning, and with the brightest earthly prospects before him. No young man, perhaps, had a better chance to secure a crown of earthly fame. But he was in the shackles of a dead religion. Then he saw the Author of life, and after he had had a glimpse of Christ, he counted all he had had before as base and worthless. He gave his life to saving the lost. He was rejected of men, scoffed at, whipped, stoned, and put in prison. He sat in the stocks in a dungeon. He was in peril among false brethren, in crossing swollen streams, was shipwrecked on the stormy deep; but he kept his eye on the imperishable crown, and never swerved from his work as a soul-winner.

As Paul stood in Athens, that center of culture and learning, the philosophers called him a babbler. But the fame of the Areopagites has passed away. Wisdom no longer centers on Mars Hill. The Stoics and Epicureans are dead, and their academies are destroyed. Monuments reared to the nation's

gods have crumbled before the ravages of time. Their statesmen, sculptors, historians, poets, and warriors are only a memory. Of what avail was the oratory of Demosthenes, the logic of Aristotle, or the poems of Homer, while the God of truth and wisdom was to them "the unknown"?

The words of Paul still live. Through all the generations of time since then, they have molded the hearts and characters of men. Today his words are translated into hundreds of languages and dialects, to cheer and instruct the downcast and ignorant; and in the land where his critics sleep in unknown graves, his words are taught with power, leading men from sin to holiness, from the power of Satan to God. His name has been immortalized in every age and in every clime.

When the great hero reached the end of his earthly journey, from a dungeon he penned these triumphant words: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Though in poverty, and impris-

oned by the haters of God, he realized that his crown was eternally secure.

Paul, the great soul-winner, stands before us as a noble example to follow. Think of that glorious hour when, in the kingdom, Paul and those whom he led to Christ will meet in an eternal reunion!

Then there is that illustrious company mentioned in Hebrews 11, who looked for a city with abiding foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They were clothed in sheepskins and goatskins, and lived in deserts, in mountains, in dens, in caves. They were mocked, scourged, bound, imprisoned, stoned, killed. But they were brave followers of Christ, giving their lives for others.

These followers of Christ were no weak and vacillating company. They had to be reckoned with then, and their influence still lives. They subdued kingdoms, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched fire, were delivered from the sword, out of weakness became strong, put to flight alien armies, and even brought the dead to life. I challenge any one to produce from the records of any age such wonderful achievements wrought by those who have made the things of this world their goal, as have been wrought by those whose lives have been devoted to the winning of souls for Christ.

Had I the time I could mention many other noble examples, not recorded in the Bible, whose lives testify that they lived to save others. Many of them were humble souls, whose deeds will be fully known only when the records on high are opened. The work of Carey in India, of Judson in Burma, and of scores of others who endured privations and sacrifices which only God understands, shows that they too lived for eternal things.

Few now can tell the names of the greatest generals in the Crimean War. By looking into the musty folios of history they can be found. But the name of Florence Nightingale, who gave her life to relieving the suffering of the soldiers in the trenches and in the hospitals, is known and remembered by all the world. She ministered to others and won their hearts. And it is said that hardened soldiers had such respect for her that they would kiss her shadow when she was passing; and not once was she subjected to insult as she moved about among those rough men. Her devoted life was her protection, and by giving that life to help others she placed her name on the scroll of fame, where it is eternally inscribed.

I might cite many instances of missionaries who have left home and all they held dear, and have gone to regions where the climate saps the vitality, that they might

warn men of the events that are coming, and lead them to prepare for a home with all the redeemed in the new earth.

It was the custom of Roman youth, when they arrived at the age of maturity, to enter a room where, in the presence of the nation's heroes and gods, they would lay aside the garments of boyhood and put on the manly toga. There they would vow to be true to the traditions and customs of their people and nation, and to maintain their virtue. How much more should those who have given their lives to God enter into his presence, and laying aside the earthly vestments of sin, vow to be true and faithful to the requirements of the King of kings, and to help unfold his gospel to lost sinners and extend the triumphs of the cross to the ends of the earth!

There is, perhaps, no finer building in the world than the Library of Congress at Washington, D. C. On every side, as one walks about the marble interior, embellished with gold and bronze, are found the names of men who have enriched the world by their genius in all the branches of science, art, and literature; and set in mosaic are many of the choice sayings of the wise and great. But I was deeply impressed one day to find in the dome, far above the names of all the philosophers and great men of earth, the words of an ancient

prophet, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" These inspired words tell the story of all true success. They are, if practiced, an eternal safeguard against failure.

Listen again to the words spoken by an angel to the aged and venerable seer in Babylon: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

It is to the enduring heavens that the Lord bids those look who win souls, that they may behold their reward. Here all things earthly gather the mold of age, the odor of decay; but the heavens are enduring. Their reward is to be like the stars — "forever and ever."

The stars shine with the same luster now as when God first brought order out of chaos, when the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The stars we behold are the same that Adam looked upon from his paradise home. They are the same that Abraham beheld in his journeyings from his father's house. There they stand, a prophecy of eternity, an emblem of an enduring crown, eternally secure to those who give their lives to the saving of the lost.

I would emphasize the special need of working for the lost *now*. The end is near, and the world is ripe for destruction. Millions, sunken in degradation and sin, are in need of help. All the people in the world are our neighbors. Our life work should be to carry the last gospel message to lost souls. The darkness in which the children of men are groping is appalling, and the work of bringing the true light to them is stupendous; but all the resources of heaven are at our command. If we go, Jesus will be with us, and he will stay with us until the end.

The true builder for eternity will be a soul-winner. He will sacrifice all to this one divine purpose. It will require toil and sacrifice, perchance the giving up of life; but from even this we dare not shrink.

On the eastern coast of New England a life-saving crew saw a wreck. The storm was beating the vessel in pieces; the crew would soon perish unless help came. As the life-savers looked upon the scene, they said, "If we go we shall never come back." The weather-beaten captain said, "Boys, we don't have to come back." As he looked at it, their duty was to *go*.

So before us lies a world, perishing. The time of rescue is almost over. Our work is to go; we do not have to return, and may not; but we do have to be faithful. To win souls for the Master may mean the loss of this

earthly life, but it is to secure the future enduring life, to build securely for eternity. Those who are faithful in this work will shine as the stars forever and ever. Let us give ourselves without reserve to the work of taking to sinful men the truths of the gospel, and entreating them to lay hold upon eternal life.

XV

The Science of Soul Winning

WHAT has been written here is designed more to kindle in the heart a desire to win souls than to deal with plans and methods of missionary endeavor in the work of searching for those who are not within the fold of God. Methods are legion, and necessarily varied. Circumstances are so different, and those in need of help are found in so many stations in life, that we have not attempted to study methods. But it may be proper to say a few words concerning the high calling and exalted privilege of being a coworker with God in saving sinners, and the responsibility resting upon us to represent rightly this great work, and by every word and act in our contact with others to lift it to the dignified and noble position which it should occupy. Surely, if any calling is worthy of our best endeavor, it is that of fitting and preparing sinful men for the companionship of God and angels through eternal ages.

Soul-saving is an art. Many, failing to recognize this, neglect to make the necessary preparation, and thus, though devoted Chris-

tians, they fail in the work of saving the lost.

"The highest of all sciences is the science of soul-saving. The greatest work to which human beings can aspire is the work of winning men from sin to holiness. For the accomplishment of this work, a broad foundation must be laid."—"*Ministry of Healing*," *p. 398*.

Here we are told that soul-saving is "the *highest* of all sciences." To master a science often requires years of patient study. Men have lost their lives in the pursuit of science. Fortunes have been spent, the bowels of the earth explored, and the utmost corners of the earth visited, in search of information on some scientific subject. Men train their minds for years, and read libraries of books, in order to be qualified to teach some branch of science. And to keep abreast of the times they must continue their pursuit of knowledge, and be familiar with all the latest scientific discoveries, and know the conclusions arrived at by the ablest minds and the best-equipped schools.

But here is the science of saving men,—a work that many seem to think can be engaged in successfully without any special preparation. The Lord has said: "He that winneth souls is wise." It should be remembered that we are to *win* souls, not drag or compel them. Dealing with the human mind is a delicate work. A novice working with the intricate mechanism

of some complicated machinery, may do damage both to himself and to the machinery. So in dealing with souls. If our efforts are not properly directed, we may do more harm than good. It has been truly said: —

"It is a great hour when a surgeon holds a scalpel, at the end of which is life or death for the patient. It is a greater hour when a lawyer faces a jury, with the conviction that if he makes a mistake an innocent man will hang, and a family be disgraced forever. But the greatest hour any human being ever faces is the hour when he stands as God's representative before a man hastening to his condemnation, commissioned to offer him a pardon that is to last for the eternities."

You have perhaps heard of the man who had been but recently converted, and longed to help some one else to find the Saviour. Meeting a man in a dark road one night, he rushed up to him and said, "Sir, are you ready to die?" The man concluded that a highwayman was attacking him, and made ready to defend himself. The convert's zeal was commendable; his motives were good; the question he asked was all right, or would have been at the proper time and place. But his manner of address was so rude that he seriously alarmed the man, instead of leading him to think seriously about the salvation of his soul.

Soul-winning requires tact. See how kindly and tactfully the Saviour dealt with his disciples after the resurrection, when seven of them in discouragement left the work he gave them to do, and went fishing in the sea of Tiberias. (See John 21.) He was not rude, and spoke no unkind words of criticism. He did not begin giving them instruction when they were cold, wet, and hungry. He called them "children," and in love invited them to eat of the food which apparently his own hands had prepared for them. Much can be learned by a study of this chapter, with this thought in view.

The following incident related by Dr. H. Clay Trumbull, an experienced soul-winner, can be studied with profit, showing how tact will win its way to the heart. The incident as told by Dr. Trumbull, is quoted by his son in "Taking Men Alive," pages 80-83. Dr. Trumbull says: —

"'Entering, one November morning, at the Grand Central Station in New York, a crowded train for Boston, I found the only vacant seat was alongside of a pleasant-faced, florid-complexioned, large-framed young man, and that seat I took, and began to read the morning paper. After a few minutes my seatmate took from his valise a large case bottle of whisky and a metal drinking cup. Before drinking

himself, he proffered it to me. As I thanked him and declined it, he drank by himself.'

"Not a particularly hopeful outlook for soul-winning, most of us would feel, and still less did there seem to be any chance for the bait of commendation. But the fisherman was doing all that he could do as yet, by studying his man and holding himself in readiness.

"'I still read my paper, but I thought of my seatmate, and I watched for an opportunity. In a little while he again turned to his valise, and, as before, took out his whisky bottle. Once more he offered it to me, and again I declined it with thanks. As he put away the bottle, after drinking from it the second time, he said: —

"'Don't you ever drink, my friend?

"'No, my friend, I do not.

"'Well, I guess you think I'm a pretty rough fellow.'

"Perhaps some of us, if we had felt any responsibility at all for speaking a word for Christ to this seatmate, would have already pointed out the danger and the wrong of his drinking. Or if not, we might have felt that he himself had now made the opening for a word of honest reproof, and with that we would have begun. Surely there was no opportunity to commend anything in this whisky-drinking stranger. But Dr. Trumbull had learned the

first principle of man-fishing, and here was his friendly, honest answer, based on the one admirable quality in this man that loving penetration had discovered: —

"'I think you're a very generous-hearted fellow.'

"And then a frank suggestion could be made in the same instant, because the first word had won, not repelled, the man. Even now it must be made in a way that should not repel by giving offense, so he continued: —

"'But I tell you frankly I don't think your whisky-drinking is the best thing about you.'

"Nor did the whisky drinker ever live who was in any doubt on this point, and promptly came the answer: —

"'Well, I don't believe it is.'

"'Why do you keep it up, then?' was the friendly question.

"And from that skilful, loving, winning start it was not difficult to have an earnest talk with this young fellow.

"'At this he told me something of his story. He was a Massachusetts country boy, now a clerk in a large New York jobbing house. He was just going to his old country home to spend Thanksgiving. He confessed that he had fallen into bad ways in the city, very different ways from those of his boyhood in Massachusetts. I asked him about his mother, and he spoke

lovingly and tenderly of her. He said he knew she was praying for him constantly. This brought us into close quarters. I told him that I was sure his mother would be happy if he prayed for himself, and that he knew that he ought to do this. I urged him to do it.

"'He was evidently surprised and touched by my expressions of interest in him. Then he spoke gratefully of another show of interest in him. He said: —

"'I was coming up Broadway the other night. It was about midnight. I had been having "a time.". . . A little ahead of me I saw a fellow in a doorway, and he came out as if he were coming for me. I squared away toward him, as I came near him, for I thought he was "laying" for me. But as I got opposite to him, he just gave me a card, and asked me to accept it, and I passed on.

"'When I got to the next lamp-post I looked at that card, and it told about a place on Twenty-third Street, called a "Young Men's Christian Association," where they'd like to have young men come in any time, and make themselves at home. And there that fellow that I'd squared away to was out there at midnight "laying" for just such bummers as I was, to invite 'em to come in and make themselves at home in that place. I declare I mean

to go up to that place, when I get back, and give 'em five dollars for the good they're doing.'

"'I told my seatmate that those who love Christ love such as he, because Christ loves them. And I urged him to make his Thanksgiving Day at his old homestead a real day of thanksgiving by telling his good mother that her prayers for him were answered.

"'That would make my old mother pretty happy, if I did that, he said heartily.

"'Wouldn't you like to make your old mother happy, as you go home to have a Thanksgiving with her? I asked.

"'Indeed I would, he said.

"'As we came to my Hartford home, where I was to leave the train, I took his hand and urged him again to do what he knew was his duty, and which would gladden his good mother's heart. He thanked me for my interest in his welfare. He promised to talk with his mother of our conversation. He assured me that he would endeavor to profit by our talk. I urged him to commit himself to Christ as the all-sufficient Saviour, and we parted.'"

Then, too, in urging gospel truths upon others, we shall find those who in the blindness of unbelief will bitterly oppose the message we bring. But we are to treat these deceived souls with kindness and due respect, and regard them as honest in their convictions.

"In the advocacy of the truth the bitterest opponents should be treated with respect and deference. Some will not respond to our efforts, but will make light of the gospel invitation. Others — even those whom we suppose to have passed the boundary of God's mercy — will be won to Christ. The very last work in the controversy may be the enlightenment of those who have not rejected light and evidence, but who have been in midnight darkness, and have in ignorance worked against the truth. Therefore treat every man as honest. Speak no word, do no deed, that will confirm any in unbelief."—"*Testimonies for the Church*," *Vol. VI, pp. 121, 122.*

The more cultured the person, the better is he fitted for soul-winning. Culture manifests itself in gentleness, in thoughtful consideration for the position, feelings, and convictions of others. People are different. Their stations in life are not all the same. Some are educated and refined; others are ignorant and uncouth. Some are rich; others are poor. Some live in mansions; others in hovels. Some are kind; others are unkind. And it is well to keep these things in mind when approaching those whom we hope to win for the Master.

The age and experience of the individual should have some bearing on the way we begin and carry forward our work for his soul. We

must study, and think, and seriously ponder the bearing of this or that method of soul-winning, as well as pray. We should exercise self-restraint, and think carefully before we speak. There are many doors of access to the human heart, but we should not aggressively push them open. Neither should we give the icy end of the plank to a drowning man if we expect to save him. We should be thoughtful, gentle, pleasant, and warm-hearted, yet without any tendency to fawn and flatter. We must love those for whom we labor if their hearts are to be reached by the gospel.

The following list of qualifications for soul-winning is given by C. H. Spurgeon: —

GODWARD	MANWARD
Holiness of character.	Knowledge.
Spiritual life.	Sincerity.
Humility.	Evident earnestness.
Living faith.	Love.
Earnestness.	Unselfishness.
Simplicity of heart.	Seriousness.
Complete surrender.	Tenderness.

Soul-winning furnishes a field for the exercise of the most thorough education and the deepest knowledge. Those qualifying themselves for this work should, if possible, enter a Christian school, and secure as thorough a training as they can in the Scriptures, in his-

tory, and in the fields of science. The time used in making preparation is by no means wasted. "If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct."

Let none be discouraged, however, because of lack of scientific attainments. The Master who took fishermen from their boats and nets and trained them for his service, will, if we but come into close contact with him, so train, refine, and polish us that we can work for souls in all walks of life. He who goes into the audience chamber and talks face to face with the King of heaven, can stand without fear, if need be, in the presence of any king or ruler of earth, and plead with him to accept the gospel and be saved.

Sufficient has been said elsewhere to show that the author regards deep piety, consecration, and earnest, importunate prayer as the highest qualifications in soul-winning. Without these no natural or acquired qualifications can avail. But the Holy Spirit can and does use and work through proper organization, methods, talent, and personal training.

Many have been great soul-winners who were far from being educated and trained. But they were pious, godly men, through whom the Holy Spirit worked. Because the Lord can and does work through any instrument that

will yield to his divine influence, is no reason why we should not study to become trained and cultured workers, capable, by the help of the Lord of the harvest, of reaching hearts in all stations in life. Hearts are often reached in spite of our abrupt, blunt ways, but it would be better to study how to approach people in such a way that they will see nothing in us to offend the most refined, cultured, and delicate taste. Above all, we should remember that the man who wins others to Christ cannot be merely a signboard, pointing the way; he must be going that way himself.

XVI

Loving Souls

To win souls, we must love them. Not wrong habits, nor eccentricities, nor nationality should be allowed to stand between us and a soul in need of help. We must see in the individual enslaved by sin, a human being for whom Jesus died, and from a heart warmed by the love which actuated our Saviour, press home to the sinner's heart the saving truths of the gospel.

It was love for the lost that led Jesus to die on the cross. It was love for souls that strengthened Paul to endure all the trials he passed through, and the sacrifices he made. Love is the mainspring of all missionary work, both at home and abroad.

The Lord uses the love of a mother as the symbol of his love for his people. "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking

child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."

There is nothing stronger in this world than the love of a godly mother for her children. Not long ago I heard a young man refer to the mother who gave him birth as the "old woman." This and similar expressions are characteristic of this ungodly, wicked age. Such a reference to one's mother is very unbecoming. It betokens a coarse, unrefined nature. The age of this young man's mother, if nothing more, should entitle her to more kindly words and respectful mention.

God blesses mothers. Speak kindly to them, young men, young women. Mother's eye is getting dim, her hair is growing gray, her form is bending, her steps are tending toward the grave. Erelong there will be a vacant chair, and those hands which have loved to minister to your needs, will be folded across the pulseless bosom on which you nestled in helpless infancy. There will be no more good-night kisses, no loving glances, no gentle caresses. The undertaker will do his work, and the dear mother who has watched over you and prayed that your feet might be kept in the path of purity and righteousness, will be gone forever.

Then you will be bereft of your best and truest friend. No one can ever take her place. No human being will ever love you with such unfathomable love as did the one whose dust lies in yonder churchyard. Others may forget and forsake you, but not mother. Sin may degrade you until those who were once friends spurn you and shut the door in your face, but the feeble, trembling mother, perhaps tottering on the brink of the grave, will welcome you and love you. She will rejoice and be proud if honor is bestowed upon you; she will cling to you if perchance you come to dishonor.

A wayward daughter who had disregarded the entreaties of a kind mother to return home, decided late one night, when cold, hungry, and homeless, to return to the parental roof. Reaching the humble home, she found the door unlocked, and cautiously stepped in. There sat her aged mother by the dying embers on the hearth. "Mother," she exclaimed, "why are you sitting here with the door unlocked so late at night?" Her mother replied, "My daughter, that door has never been fastened since you left. I was afraid you might return, and, finding it locked, go away again." That's mother.

Napoleon is reported to have said, "The greatest need of France is mothers." A wayward young man stood before the judge of a

great court to be sentenced to death. When asked if he had anything to say, he bowed his head and exclaimed, "O judge, if I had only had a mother!"

The home fireside is a kingdom in itself. Here the godly mother sits an uncrowned but unrivaled queen. Let no coarse words be spoken of her, but let "her children arise up, and call her blessed." Home and mother make a vision that never fades from the mind.

"A mother's love, how sweet the name!
What is a mother's love?
A noble, pure, and tender flame,
Enkindled from above,
To bless a heart of earthly mold;
The warmest love that *can* grow cold,
This is a mother's love."

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman relates the following incident, showing the unfailing love of one mother for her wayward son: —

"When I was in Atlanta, Ga., in October, 1904, a little girl and an old mother came to see the governor. They had met on the train, and the child agreed to take the old lady to see the governor of the State. Together they entered the governor's office, and the following conversation took place: —

"'I want to see the governor,' was the straightforward request of the little lady, addressed to Major Irwin, the private secretary

to the governor, as he inquired her errand.

"'That is the governor standing there. He will see you in a moment,' replied the major, indicating Governor Terrell standing in the group. The governor went over to her. 'What can I do for you, dear?' he asked. Throwing back her curls, she opened wide her baby brown eyes and said: —

"'Governor, it is not for me; it is for this old lady. Her name is Mrs. Hackett, and she wants to talk to you about pardoning her boy.' This was said by the little lady of eleven, who spoke with the grace and *savoir-faire* of a woman twice her age.

"In a voice choked with emotion, Mrs. Hackett began her tearful, scarcely audible story, and presented her petition for clemency for her boy.

"'Governor, have mercy on me,' she began, and threw back her bonnet, showing a face wrinkled by age and furrowed and drawn by suffering, 'and give me back my boy.'

"Breaking down under the strain of talking to the governor, whom she had planned for months to see, the pleading mother gave way to her grief. The governor was visibly moved, and continued to stroke the curly hair of Mrs. Hackett's little guide. 'Give me back my boy. I am an old woman, going on seventy-nine, and I cannot be here long. I know I am

standing with one foot in the grave, and I do want to hear my boy, my baby, say to me, "Ma, I'm free." Let me go down on my knees to you and beg that you have mercy on a mother's breaking heart. During the last month I picked five hundred pounds of cotton and made two dollars to get here to see you. I got here without a cent, and this little angel gave me a dollar — her all. I don't care if I have to walk back home, for I've seen you and told you of my boy.'

"With unsteady voice the governor told her the law, and referred her gently to the prison commission, assuring her that they would give her petition the most considerate attention. I am told that when the books were examined, the crime was found to be one of the blackest on the calendar, and yet the mother loved him."

His aged mother did not care how black his sin looked in the calendar. He was her boy, and she loved him. So with God; he loves sinners as does a mother her boy, yea, with even greater love. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men," are the encouraging words to sinners from the lips of the Master. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." God loves sinners, and through all the earth is

searching for the lost. But not until this same love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, can we be much used of God in winning men from a life of sin to one of holiness. Once this love fills the soul, there will be an unutterable yearning in our hearts to see those who are out of Christ, prodigals wandering away from their Father's house, and those who have no hope, turn to God, and lay hold upon the glorious hope of the Christian. Like the loving mother, we shall not stop to see how deeply they are dyed in sin; that they are lost will be sufficient, and like Paul, with prayer and many tears and tender entreaties, we shall labor night and day for their salvation.

"At first I prayed for *light;*
Could I but see my way,
How gladly, swiftly, would I walk
To everlasting day!

'And next I prayed for *strength,*
That I might tread the road
With firm, unfaltering feet, and win
The heavens' serene abode!

"And then I asked for *faith;*
Could I but trust my God,
I'd live enfolded in his peace
Though foes were all abroad!

"But now I pray for *love;*
Deep love to God and man —
A living love, that will not fear,
However dark his plan!"

XVII

Objections Answered

In a parable of our Saviour, "a certain man made a great supper, and bade many." After the feast had been prepared, he sent out the hospitable message, "Come; for all things are now ready." But "they all with one consent began to make excuse." Each, apparently absorbed in his own affairs, seemed to treat the proffered kindness with utter indifference.

This is a symbol of our time. We are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." But so often the personal worker comes in contact with those who, though under the Spirit's pleading power, continually make excuse for not accepting the invitation.

Thinking it might be helpful in meeting some of those objections, and serve to save some who are barricading themselves behind numerous excuses, I have prepared a list of those most frequently urged, together with a few texts of scripture most helpful in meeting them.

1. I do not need to hurry; there is plenty of time.

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

2. There are so many hypocrites in the church.

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. . . . So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

3. I expect to be a Christian sometime, but will wait awhile.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

"He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

4. I will wait till a more convenient time.

"As the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

"He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

5. I am too great a sinner.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

6. I will wait till I am older; I am too young to be a Christian.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

"Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

7. I love the world, and there is too much to give up.

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

8. If I should start to be a Christian, I fear I could not hold out.

"Unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

9. I started to be a Christian before, and failed; so I think I will not try again.

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me."

"A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

10. I am a backslider, and do not believe the Lord cares for me.

"A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God."

11. I cannot give up my pleasures.

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart,

and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."

12. My day of grace has passed.

"If ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him."

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

13. I shall lose all my friends.

"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

14. I will lose my position, and cannot make a living.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

"The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

15. It will hinder my becoming rich.

"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity."

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent."

16. How can I be sure that my sins are forgiven?

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

17. I do not feel concerned; I am not very bad.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

XVIII

The Starless Crown

"Wearied and worn with earthly care, I yielded to repose,
And soon before my raptured sight a glorious vision rose.
I thought, while slumbering on my couch in midnight's solemn gloom,
I heard an angel's silvery voice, and radiance filled my room.
A gentle touch awakened me, a gentle whisper said,
'Arise, O sleeper, follow me!' and through the air we fled;
We left the earth so far away that like a speck it seemed,
And heavenly glory, calm and pure, across our pathway streamed.

"Still on we went; my soul was wrapped in silent ecstasy;
I wondered what the end would be, what next would meet my eye.
I knew not how we journeyed through the pathless fields of light,
When suddenly a change was wrought, and I was clothed in white.
We stood before a city's walls, most glorious to behold;
We passed through gates of glittering pearl, o'er streets of purest gold.
It needed not the sun by day, nor silver moon by night;
The glory of the Lord was there, the Lamb himself its light.

"But fairer far than all beside, I saw my Saviour's face,
And as I gazed, he smiled on me with wondrous love and grace.
Slowly I bowed before his throne, o'erjoyed that I at last
Had gained the object of my hopes, that earth at length was past.
And then in solemn tones he said, 'Where is the diadem
That ought to sparkle on thy brow, adorned with many a gem?
I know thou hast believed on me, and life, through me, is thine,
But where are all those radiant stars that in thy crown should shine?

"'I did not mean that thou shouldst tread the way of life alone,
But that the clear and shining light which round thy footsteps shone
Should guide some other weary feet to my bright home of rest,
And thus in blessing those around, thou hadst thyself been blest.'
The vision faded from my sight; the voice no longer spake;
A spell seemed brooding o'er my soul, which long I feared to break;
And when at last I gazed around, in morning's glimmering light,
My spirit fell, o'erwhelmed amid that vision's awful night.

"I rose and wept with chastened joy that yet I dwelt below,
That yet another hour was mine, my faith by works to show,

That yet some sinner I might tell of Jesus' dying love,
And help to lead some weary soul to seek a home above.
And now while on the earth I stay, my motto this shall be,
'To live no longer to myself, but him who died for me.'
And graven on my inmost soul this word of truth divine,
'Th[illegible] that turn many to the Lord bright as the stars [illegible]hine.'"

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